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LD091341 [Editorial Report]

Israel

Gaza Issue—Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir sharply criticized Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' proposal to demilitarize the Gaza Strip, telling Likud MK's that "this will never be" and "the people of Israel will strike these statements off the national agenda," Jerusalem radio reported. Asking what is meant by demilitarization, he wondered whether Peres means to hand Gaza over to the "terrorists" and "to tell the Arabs that we are panic stricken." Shamir said he finds it "difficult to comprehend the enthusiasm of those who want Israel to lie on the operating table, ready for others to chop off its limbs. Today it is Gaza, tomorrow it may be Judaea and Samaria, and then even the Golan Heights."

According to HADASHOT, Peres' proposal is part of a planned overall political settlement with Jordan in which Gaza would be part of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation. Israel would retain control over Gaza's defense affairs, but Gaza would have a system of self-rule over local affairs and would be linked by land with the West Bank.

As for the security situation in Gaza, IDF radio announced that a refugee camp resident was killed and several were wounded by IDF gunfire 9 December. The Israeli soldiers opened fire when a Molotov cocktail was thrown at their patrol.

Criticism of U.S. Ambassador—A MA'ARIV commentary castigated Ambassador Thomas Pickering for appearing at a Labor Party convention and for promoting "a Jordanian policy built entirely on options desirable to Husayn." Pickering's public support for an international conference is unacceptable to his superiors in Washington and is "certainly not acceptable to us," the commentator maintained.

Southern Lebanon

One IDF soldier was killed and another wounded when their vehicle hit a mine in the central sector of Israel's security zone, IDF radio reported. SLA tanks and artillery fired at Shi'ite villages north of the security zone following a "terrorist" attack on an SLA post, Jerusalem radio noted. The clandestine Voice of the Mountain radio subsequently cited reports that over 60 Israeli military vehicles have crossed into Lebanon, heading toward Jazzin and the western part of the Al-Biqa' valley.

Gulf Conflict

Iraqi warplanes raided a "very large" maritime target near the Iranian coast 8 December, Iraq announced in a communique carried by Voice of the Masses radio. INA subsequently cited a Lloyds report that the target was an Iranian oil tanker.

IRNA reported an Iranian air attack on Iraqi military targets east of Basra 9 December.

French Expulsion of Iranians

France expelled 17 Mojahedin-e Khalq members to Gabon, Paris radio reported, noting that the expellees comprise 14 Iranians and 3 Turks. Nine other members of the Iranian opposition group are under house arrest in France. While the French Interior Ministry described the 17 expelled Mojahedin as a "serious and immediate threat to public order," the UN High Commission for Refugees stressed that most of them had proper political refugee status, the radio noted. In a letter to the French president cited by AFP, Mojahedin leader Mas'ud Rajavi contended that France is allowing its human rights principles to be "trampled underfoot and taken hostage by Khomeyni."

Sudan

SPLA on Kurmuk—Another "desperate" attempt to recapture Kurmuk was "crushed" 5 December and government forces "withdrew in disarray," a spokesman for the SPLM-SPLA Political-Military High Command told the SPLA's clandestine radio, adding that "heavy fighting" continues in the area. SPLA intelligence has information about the location and strength of a government force which is preparing another attack, the spokesman said, stressing that this force will likewise be "wiped out."

PRC Visit—Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi will begin a 7-day visit to the PRC 19 December, SUNA reported, citing a "responsible source" who told AL-AYYAM that Sudan is seeking new channels of cooperation with the PRC.

Tunisia

In further reorganization of the ruling Socialist Destourian Party, President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali appointed a 12-man Political Bureau and established 4 committees on various party affairs, Tunis radio reported.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Says Summit To Discuss Middle East

NC082235 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2210 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Paris, 8 Dec (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has stated that during the current Soviet-American summit in Washington, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev will propose the idea of holding an international conference for peace in the Middle East.

In statements to Al-Sharq Radio, the mouthpiece of the Arab and Islamic community in Paris, today, 'Arafat said that the Soviet leader and other Soviet officials had confirmed to him during his recent visit to the Soviet Union that the Middle East problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict will be included on the summit agenda as one of the eight hot issues in the world. He reiterated the Soviet Union's insistence on proposing the notion of an international conference under UN auspices and with the participation of the five permanent Security Council members, in addition to all the concerned parties, including the PLO, in its capacity as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing.

'Arafat added that the statement published by the U.S. Administration and signed by President Reagan, which listed the summit agenda, included both the Iraq-Iran war and the Arab-Israeli conflict as two of the issues to be discussed. He noted that the views of the United States and the Soviet Union on the notion of an international conference differ. He said that the Soviet view of such a conference is that it should establish the Palestinians' inalienable national rights and their right to return and establish an independent state.

'Arafat noted that the U.S. view of an international conference revolves around the plan drawn up by Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres; namely, that it should be a mere formality and without PLO participation.

'Arafat on Improved Relations With Syria

LD082140 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has confirmed that matters have been improving between the PLO and Syria since the start of reconciliation between the two sides, thanks to the initiative of Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid. Brother Abu 'Ammar expressed in a press statement the belief that the start of this reconciliation, which took place during the extraordinary summit in Amman last November, has been a firm step forward.

'New Phase' in PLO-Syrian Cooperation Seen

PM081225 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 Dec 87 p 1

[Zaki Musa report: "Confirming AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's Exclusive Report, Abu Iyad Says: New Phase of Cooperation With Damascus Has Begun"]

[Excerpt] London—The PLO has confirmed that a new phase of cooperation with Syria has begun and that the cloud which had threatened these relations is dispersing. Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf—Abu Iyad—said, in a telephone statement from his headquarters in Tunis to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in London, that "after a series of dialogues with the Syrian leadership, I believe that a new Syrian-Palestinian position is being consolidated, the aim being to turn a new page in relations between the two sides."

Salah Khalaf added: "We in the PLO are awaiting a Syrian decision to receive a high-level Palestinian delegation to discuss, directly, all pending issues in the interest and in the service of the Palestinian and Arab struggle and in the interest of soldarity as a whole."

Abu Iyad said that the Palestinian leadership had received the news of the release of the detainees with much gratitude to the Syrian leadership and hoped that this would herald a new era in Syria's relations with the PLO in general and with Fatah in particular.

The Fatah Central Committee member noted that the recent activity with regard to the issue of the camps in Lebanon, what was achieved by the parties concerned toward eliminating problems related to the issue of the fighters east of Sidon, the entry of supplies and building materials into the camps, and the release of the detainees were, without doubt, the result of efforts which have borne fruit through the cooperation of all Syrian, Palestinian, and Lebanese parties.

This Abu Iyad statement confirms AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's exclusive report yesterday about Syria's release of 150 pro-'Arafat detainees. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Arrives in Tunis From Sanaa 6 Dec

JN082045 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, arrived in Tunis from Sanaa the day before yesterday at the end of his tour of the PDRY, Ethiopia, and the YAR. During his tour, he participated in celebrations of the independence anniversary in Aden and in the extraordinary African economic summit in Addis Ababa. He also held important talks with his brother, President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, on various developments in the Middle East.

Former Abu Nidal Official Assassinated
NC090546 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] A Palestinian source has announced that Abu Wa'il, a former official of Fatah—Revolutionary Council, led by Abu Nidal [Sabri al-Banna], was assassinated in the Shatila camp at 2050 yesterday. He was shot in the head in front of his house. It should be recalled that this is the first assassination in the camp since the outbreak of the camps war in May 1985.

AL-SHIRA' Interviews Glider Attack Commander
NC081123 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 7 Dec 87 pp 16-20

[Report on interview with Abu Hasan, commander of the "storming group" in the Qibyah hang-glider attack, by reporter 'Adnan al-Sahili at a PFLP-GC base; location of base and date not given]

[Text] The "Qibyah" martyrs operation, which was carried out by a group of PFLP-GC fliers, came as a surprise to all those concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arabs, the Zionists, and other influential international parties. The operation, carried out shortly after the Amman summit, pointed the compass needle of Arab struggle in the right direction once again. The most significant aspect of the operation is that it was aimed at an Israeli military camp. Needless to say, the Israeli society is a military community. This is why the blow was all the more painful when the revolutionaries' rifles turned the Gipur camp, which means "the camp of heroes" in Hebrew, into a grave for Israeli soldiers.

The operation sent shock waves through the Zionist society and its military machine. The shock waves also reverberated in certain Palestinian and Arab quarters. Arabs who used to call for a peaceful settlement and for meetings with the Israelis hurried to acclaim the operation. The operation also had a wide regional and international impact and drew feverish threats of retaliation from Israel.

At a PFLP-GC base, AL-SHIRA' met with Brother Abu Hasan, the commander of the storming group in the Qibyah martyrs operation and discussed with him the details of the operation and how it was implemented.

[Al-Sahili] How did your operation against the enemy camp begin?

[Abu Hasan] We began preparations a few months ago. After the necessary surveillance, training, and preparation, we went to a certain area in the Lebanese south. We brought the gliders into the security strip with the help of comrades and friends in the south. We then received our orders, setting the time for 2100. We were given a send-off by our leaders. A certain group of leaders was there to say goodbye to us and another group was also on hand to welcome us upon our return to another area, the road we took to Palestine being different from the route back.

[Al-Sahili] Did you encounter any particular difficulties before carrying out the operation?

[Abu Hasan] Not at all. We did not meet any obstacles. We spent about 20 minutes in the landing spot. During that time we divided the group into two. I and martyr Abu Rami were in the first group and the second group was to give cover, to confront enemy reinforcements, and to kill those who tried to flee the camp. The second group was also given the task of protecting the gliders and attacking the sleeping quarters.

When we entered the camp, we were met with no obstacles whatsoever. We entered from the main gate and the guards saw us, but they tried to escape rather than confront us. We killed some of them straight away and stormed the camp, firing fiercely. I divided the work between myself and my comrade Abu Rami and we engaged the enemy. I cannot say how long the battle lasted because of the state of mind that I, like any fighter, was in.

We went into something like a mess hall, where several Zionists were present. Some were playing cards, some were having drinks, and some were watching television. We threw grenades at them, firing simultaneously right and left, I and my comrade Abu Rami. While we were on our way into the camp and during the ensuing battle we were able to perceive that another battle was going on outside the camp. A vehicle, or a patrol, or some personnel were trying to enter the camp and the cover group, Abu 'Ali the Tunisian—God bless his soul—and Abu Tha'ir opened fire.

We kept on hurling hand grenades at the sleeping quarters for approximately 15 minutes before they woke up from their sleep, recovered from their shock, and answered us. We saw many of them in their pyjamas inside the camp. The fighting went on for some time. Our comrade Abu Rami was hit by several bullets, including one that wounded him fatally in the neck. I spoke to him while he was still alive. He appealed to me to withdraw, in the name of the martyrs.

The purpose of our operation was to hit the camp which led the operations in the 1982 war. Our operation was carried out in implementation of a decision by our command. Abu Rami appealed to me, saying that now that we had carried out this task, he would cover our withdrawal. However, an unequal clash then took place. The enemy brought in large rescue forces. Helicopters went into action and the northeastern part of the camp was illuminated. Martyr hero Abu Rami begged us to withdraw. As I was leaving I heard the sound of the bullets which he was firing to cover our withdrawal.

[Al-Sahili] In other words, Abu Rami was martyred near you?

[Abu Hasan] Abu Rami was martyred about 15 meters away from me. We had agreed to distribute the tasks among us and not get too far away from each other because of the darkness. I was firing in one direction and he was firing in another. When Abu Rami was hit, I crawled up to him and spoke with him. He kissed me and appealed to us to withdraw, having ascertained that we had carried out our mission and that he had fully done his duty.

[Al-Sahili] What kind of weapons were used in this operation?

[Abu Hasan] We had enough weapons to fight for 4 hours.

[Al-Sahili] Did you land near the camp or far away from it?

[Abu Hasan] We landed about 350 meters away from the camp. We then ran for 3 minutes or less until we reached the camp.

[Al-Sahili] Did you come across any enemy forces before attacking the camp?

[Abu Hasan] No, we saw no forces before we attacked the camp. We fired at the guard, who fled. After a few minutes we heard shooting. We were sure then that our comrades, who were charged with protection, had fired at a car or a patrol.

[Al-Sahili] How did you escape the enemy's rescue forces and effect your withdrawal?

[Abu Hasan] We tried to provide cover for each other. As I told you, an unequal clash occurred because of the large rescue forces brought in by the enemy, who was confused. His aircraft filled the sky and dropped flares. Each of his planes dropped about five flares simultaneously. We exploited the enemy's state of confusion and the sound of the helicopter engines which filled the place. I set off first and was followed by my comrade Abu Tha'ir and then my comrade Abu 'Ali, the Tunisian. We talked to each other by radio. I made sure that the comrades were leaving. I got in touch with the reception group to say that we had taken off but that we were having much difficulty in flying.

It appears that when we left, the Zionist enemy noticed that a plane had taken off. I guess that the enemy saw only the plane of our comrade Abu 'Ali. The enemy chased him. He contacted me and said that he was encountering some difficulties. We were able to fly and rise above the helicopters. Our comrade Abu 'Ali could not fly very high because the enemy's helicopters had sighted him and started firing at him. He contacted us again and said that he had been hit in the right leg, that he would be forced to land, and that he was outside the strip. I asked him to land and told him that we would be waiting for him 4 km away. I also told him to continue his flight if he could.

We then arrived at the place where the reception group was. Some of the group's members stayed behind to wait for our comrade Abu 'Ali. We saw the enemy's helicopters illuminating the area with their flares. We felt as if some of us were living on the North Pole and others on the South Pole, meaning on the Al-Hulah plain on the border strip. This area was fully illuminated, but the area where we were remained in total darkness.

We stayed until approximately 0330 or 0400 in the morning, waiting for comrade Abu 'Ali. The Zionist enemy was still confused. The helicopters were still active, coming and going. The area where comrade Abu 'Ali landed was being raked. The Zionist enemy concentrated heavily on that place. We saw a helicopter landing on a hill overlooking the place where our comrade had landed. The enemy's forces were still completely surrounding the area. We could see very clearly how the battle was going.

I realized that comrade Abu 'Ali's return had become very difficult. Our comrades then took the gliders and moved them away. We stayed behind with a group, waiting for our comrade somewhere else. A 30-minute clash ensued at 0830 in the morning. It appears that our comrade died during this clash. As I previously pointed out, our comrade had told us that he was hit in his right leg. We had been unable to contact him by radio since then. It appears that he had landed in a place that was entirely unsuitable for communicating by the radio which ensured his continuous contact with the other members of the group, while we were waiting for him somewhere high up.

[Al-Sahili] Will you tell us exactly how many casualties you inflicted on the enemy?

[Abu Hasan] Regarding the number of casualties, there were approximately 13 soldiers in the hall where the television was, in addition to the guards and the enemy elements who were sleeping in the dormitories which we attacked. I cannot say exactly how many deaths and injuries there were. As far as I can judge, there were 35 to 40 casualties, both killed and wounded.

[Al-Sahili] Was your operation a suicide one or was your return almost guaranteed?

[Abu Hasan] Our return was guaranteed because it was not a suicide operation. We had agreed that should one of us be injured and unable to take off, he would have to cover his companions' withdrawal or takeoff. If we had been surrounded and could not reach the gliders, we would have fought to the death.

[Al-Sahili] How do you feel now that you have returned safely from the operation?

[Abu Hasan] Actually, I feel that we did our duty and carried out the orders of our command, both the high command and the supervisory command. We are very sorry that Abu Rami and Abu 'Ali were martyred. Yet our happiness was overwhelming because we managed to break through the barriers erected by the Zionist enemy, the electronic barriers, the radar, and so on.

We managed to refute the claims of the Zionist enemy's chiefs of staff, and prove that this enemy is not a "superman." We proved that any Arab can fly over Palestine and perform his duty as best as he can. By the way, the Zionist enemy is completely different from Arab fighters in that its individuals cannot make a move unless there are reinforcements, whether in the form of airplanes, helicopters, or tanks. But they are not capable of face-to-face fighting.

[Al-Sahili] What kind of training did you receive prior to the operation?

[Abu Hasan] For a few months we received mobilization training [tadribat ta'bawiyyah] and flight training. But the emphasis was on the mobilization training.

[Al-Sahili] Do you fly warplanes or gliders only?

[Abu Hasan] I can fly an airplane.

[Al-Sahili] What are the advantages of the glider you flew?

[Abu Hasan] I cannot tell you about that. To speak simply, I can say that with a few months' training, anyone could fly that glider. It is not complicated.

[Al-Sahili] Are you willing to repeat the same operation?

[Abu Hasan] I am a military man who carries out the orders of his command. I do not think that anyone would hesitate to visit Palestine, where his land is and his people. When we chose this course, we were aware that the road would be a long and difficult one and that it would not be strewn with roses. We knew that we risked martyrdom, captivity, imprisonment, or injury. It was a choice we had already made.

I would like to address a message to the Zionist and terrorist enemy. No matter how many barriers they put up or technological methods they use, they will never be able to prevent an Arab from flying over his land.

To the Zionist settlers I say: We pick the moment we want to land in any settlement. If the target this time was a military one, next time we may land in a settlement to kill those who live in our homes and those who committed massacres against our people, the Arab people. This is the law, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and the wrongdoer is to blame.

There will be other times, God willing. This operation is not the last. We say to settlers: Leave our land and go back where you came from. We declare that we will hold on to our land in Palestine, the cradle of religion. We would not exchange the most beautiful city in the world for a stable in Galilee.

Algeria

USSR Higher Education Minister Arrives 5 Dec

Makes Statement

LD060030 Algiers APS in Arabic 1455 GMT 5 Dec 87

[Text] Algiers, 5 Dec 87, (APS)—Gennadiy Aleksyevich Yagodin, USSR minister of higher and secondary specialized education, arrived this morning, Saturday, at Houari Boumedienne International Airport, leading an important delegation on a visit to Algeria at the invitation of Higher Education Minister Boubekeur Belcaid.

The Soviet minister made a statement at the airport in which he expressed his satisfaction at being in Algeria. He also pointed out that the two countries have a cultural and human mission that contributes to safeguarding the future of mankind and that scientists and artists have an important role in establishing and preserving peace.

The Soviet delegation will hold talks with a number of Algerian officials and will visit several institutes and institutions of the higher education sector.

Begins Talks 6 Dec

LD061605 Algiers APS in English 1132 GMT 6 Dec 87

[Text] Algiers, 5/12/87 (APS)—The reinforcement of relations in higher education was at the center of the works of the Algerian-Soviet commission which started Saturday here under the chairmanship of minister of higher education, Boubekeur Belcaid, and the Soviet minister of higher and specialized technical education, Yagodin. The two delegations examined the reinforcement of the inter-university cooperation, the setting up of specialized institutions in technology, the training of Algerian trainers and the making of scientific and didactic instruments.

Confers With Ministers

LD071313 Algiers APS in English 1005 GMT 7 Dec 87

[Text] Algiers, December 7 (APS)—Youth and Sports Minister Abdelhaq Bererhi received on Sunday here the Soviet minister of higher specialised and technical education, Yagodin. During this audience Bererhi made an extensive expose on the means made available to youth by the political leaedership. The two sides expressed satisfaction over the excellent relations existing between the two countries and discussed ways of strengthening cooperation particularly in the field of youth exchanges, training and research.

Earlier, Yagodin was audienced by Heavy Industry Minister Faysal Boudraa. Talks centered on ways of strengthening cooperation particularly in the field of technical and higher education.

Received by Messaadia

LD090023 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Mohamed Cherif Messaadia, member of the Political Bureau and official of the Permanent Secretariat of the Central Committee, received Mr Yagodin, USSR minister of higher and secondary specialized education, at the party headquarters today .

After the Soviet minister had recorded his appreciation of the efforts exerted by Algeria in the fields of education, vocational training, and research, talks focused on relations between the two parties, as well as areas of cooperation. The meeting was attended by Abderrazak Bouhara, member of the Permanent Secretariat of the Central Committee in charge of external relations, and the USSR ambassador to Algeria.

Libyan Envoy Delivers Message for Bendjedid

LD060002 Algiers APS in English 1342 GMT 5 Dec 87

[Text] Algiers, 5 Dec (APS)—The head of the CC Permanent Secretariat, Mohamed Cherif Messaadia, received today here Abu Zayd 'Umar Durdah, secretary of the People's Committee of the Mouhafada of Jabal Gharbi, and Libya's special envoy. Abu Zayd gave Messaadia a message from the secretary general of the Libyan General Congress for President Chadli Bendjedid.

Egypt

Presidency Statement on INF Treaty

NC082053 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2010 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—The Arab Republic of Egypt has welcomed the agreement reached by the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate intermediate nuclear missiles from Europe. Egypt considers this historic step to be an important achievement for the entire international community in the field of disarmament and in halting the arms race.

In a statement issued by the Presidency today, Egypt called for using the impetus resulting from this step to help resolve urgent regional problems which are threatening the lives of many peoples in the Third World countries and which are causing instability and imbalance throughout the world. Foremost of these problems are the ones existing in the Middle East region.

The following is the text of the Presidency's statement:

The Arab Republic of Egypt welcomes the agreement reached by the United States of America and the Soviet Union to remove the intermediate range nuclear weapons from Europe. Egypt considers this historic step to be an important achievement for the entire international community in the field of disarmament and in halting the arms race.

President Muhammad Husni Mubarak congratulates President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on this great achievement. He expresses his hope and the hope of the Egyptian people that the signing of this agreement will lead to other tangible steps toward nuclear and conventional disarmament and to the elimination of the danger of a destructive world war that would threaten humanity's heritage and civilization.

Because the issue of security and peace are the same and interlinked in the various parts of the world, Egypt calls for using the impetus that will be created by this step to help resolve the urgent regional problems which are threatening the lives of numerous peoples in the Third World countries and which are causing instability and imbalance throughout the world. Foremost of these problems are the ones existing in the Middle East region.

'Abd al-Majid Comments

NC082108 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2026 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has described the U.S.-Soviet agreement to eliminate intermediate nuclear missiles from Europe as the beginning of the right course and an important step on the road to finding a common basis for understanding between the two great powers.

In a statement made on the occasion of the signing of this agreement in Washington today, Dr 'Abd al-Majid expressed his hope that the agreement would reduce tension and would help lead to the conclusion of other agreements to reduce nuclear weapons and to establish security and peace in the world.

The Egyptian foreign minister also expressed his hope that the agreement would open the way for resolving regional conflicts, particularly the Middle East one and the Palestinian issue.

Further on FRG Foreign Minister's Visit

Debt Agreement Signed

NC081232 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1010 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Excerpts] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—Egypt and the FRG signed two agreements today. One deals with the rescheduling of Egypt's debts to the FRG, and the other is on the avoidance of double taxation on income in the two countries.

Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi signed the agreements for Egypt, while Hans-Dietrich Genscher, FRG foreign minister, signed on behalf of his country. [passage omitted]

The FRG foreign minister said that the two agreements are part of the efforts being made to bolster bilateral cooperation. He pointed out that the agreement on rescheduling debts is the FRG's contribution to bolstering economic relations and supporting the Egyptian economy, adding that it reflects the FRG's interest in Egypt's development efforts. He asserted that his country will continue to assist Egypt in finding proper solutions for economic problems. He said that by underwriting Egyptian debts, the FRG is expressing confidence in the Egyptian economy.

In conclusion, Genscher hoped that bilateral cooperation will be further strengthened in the various fields.

Credit Guarantees Announced

LD081254 Hamburg DPA in German 1152 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo (DPA-VWD)—Egypt will again receive Hermes [finance credit] guarantees for German exports. Federal Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher made this announcement today during his 1-day visit to Cairo. Earlier, Genscher and Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi signed an agreement on avoiding double taxation and an agreement on rescheduling DM 850 million of Egypt's foreign debts.

According to sources in the German delegation, an initial Hermes ceiling of DM 300 million is being considered. The guarantees were canceled at the beginning of 1987 until the conclusion of the rescheduling agreement. Genscher assured Cairo of Bonn's help in solving its economic problems. The rescheduling agreement and the treaty on avoiding double taxation are contributions to the "consolidation of the Egyptian economy".

Confers With 'Abd al-Majid

NC081609 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] President Husni Mubarak received FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and his accompanying delegation at the Presidential Palace in Heliopolis this afternoon. Attending the meeting were Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the FRG ambassador in Cairo.

Following this meeting, Dr 'Abd al-Majid described the talks, which had continued throughout the day, as very fruitful. He pointed out that the views of both parties were identical on several international issues. Dr 'Abd al-Majid reported that the talks had dealt with the current situation in the Gulf, the Middle East problem, the U.S.-Soviet summit, and other issues of mutual concern. He stressed that Egypt and the FRG had exhibited complete understanding with regard to the

issues discussed. He pointed out that the FRG will chair the EC for 6 months beginning 1 January, adding that we expect several activities during this period. With regard to bilateral relations, the Egyptian foreign minister said that two agreements had been signed: one on the rescheduling of Egypt's debts to the FRG, and the second banning dual taxation. He affirmed that these agreements will help to create new and valuable FRG investments in Egypt. He also stated that we view Genscher's visit to Egypt as successful and as having achieved its purpose.

For his part, Genscher said that the talks had focused on the excellent bilateral ties and important international issues. The U.S.-Soviet summit, he asserted, is of special importance not only for the United States and the Soviet Union, but for Europe and the Arab world as well. He added: We hope that both sides are concerned with achieving further steps in the disarmament field and with seeking progress in bringing their views closer on regional problems. This is especially true with regard to the efforts being made to end the Gulf war and to resolve the Middle East problem, he noted, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict. Genscher reported that he had expressed to President Mubarak the FRG Government's satisfaction with Egypt's policy, which is characterized by responsibility and power and which has led a large number of Arab countries to resume diplomatic relations. The outcome of the Amman summit, he noted, is considered to be a great success. He added that the FRG supports the efforts being made to end the Gulf war.

Meets With Abu Ghazalah

NC081853 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1843 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production, met with FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher this afternoon. The FRG minister is currently visiting Cairo. The meeting was attended by Egyptian Ambassador in Bonn Al-Shafi'i 'Abd al-Hamid. During the meeting, the discussion dealt with boosting military cooperation between the two countries.

Holds News Conference

NC081933 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1830 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher has stressed that Egyptian-FRG relations are characterized by trust and friendliness and that it is in both countries' interests to expand bilateral political and economic cooperation. He said that this cooperation has been expressed in the signing of a new agreement banning dual taxation and another agreement rescheduling Egypt's debts. Genscher emphasized that with the latter agreement, the FRG expresses its confidence in Egypt's economy.

The FRG Government, he added, has also decided to provide a new framework that will guarantee the export of FRG goods to Egypt in 1988. The FRG foreign minister said that the FRG Government emphasizes its confidence in the good progress being made by the Egyptian economy, as well as in that country's political and economic stability. Genscher made these statements at a news conference he held at the conclusion of his visit to Egypt.

Genscher noted that this visit assumes special importance at this time because it follows the successful summit in Amman. That summit, he said, resulted in the recognition that Mubarak's successful and stable policy, which is based on shouldering responsibility, had motivated the Arab countries to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt. This is considered a personal victory for President Mubarak.

He pointed out that the FRG welcomes this development, because we believe that an important step has been taken toward a unified Arab stand and toward a peaceful solution. We agree with the Egytpian Government, the FRG foreign minister added, that it is in the interest of all parties to reach an agreement to convene an international conference for peace as quickly as possible to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. He noted that the FRG supports the convening of such a conference.

Speaking on the Gulf war, Genscher said: We support the UN secretary general's efforts toward the implementation of Security Council Resolution 598 as a means to end this war. It is a source of worry and instability not only for the parties involved in the fighting but also for the entire Middle East region.

On the current talks in Washington between U.S. President Reagan and Soviet leader Gorbachev, Genscher stressed that the FRG Government and the Egyptian leadership agree that the improvement of relations betwen Washington and Moscow is in the interest of the Europeans, as well as the peoples of the Middle East. This improvement also serves those two countries' cooperation to resolve regional problems. The solving of such problems, Genscher noted, is one of the concerns of both Egypt and the FRG. He said that the conflict between the East and the West should not be moved to the Middle East, but should be solved through peaceful means.

Genscher disclosed that the Egyptian leaders have expressed their satisfaction with the signing of the agreement eliminating intermediate nuclear missiles, which means eliminating the threat not only to Europe but also to the Middle East and all the peoples of the world.

The German minister expressed the hope that this step would be followed by several other steps in the disarmament field. He also expressed hope that the conferees in Washington would be able to agree on the basis for a 50 percent reduction in the arsenals of the two superpowers' strategic nuclear weapons.

Genscher also expressed the hope that international chemical warfare would be averted, European stability would be established, and preparations for negotiations on short-range nuclear weapons would be made.

The FRG foreign minister expressed his belief that the new concept expressed in the development of U.S.-Soviet relations is consistent with international development in general and will lead to a noticeable improvement in East-West relations. He said: Therefore, Europe must play an important role, because the imrpovement in East-West relations will also have a favorable effect on the divided European Continent, referring in this regard to the division of Germany. He added that the Europeans are eager for this development in East-West relations to achieve steady success.

Genscher pointed out that the signing of a disarmament agreement between the two superpowers also means improving the atmosphere between East and West and particularly between the two superpowers. He said: When this agreement is signed, it will improve the basis of East-West confidence. He asserted that this will definitely lead to positive results in other spheres.

The German foreign minister added that this is the positive element in this event. It is the basis of the confidence emanating from the Washington agreement. This confidence may also be reflected in the achievement of a solution of the Middle East problem. He affirmed that the improvement in East-West relations offers hope to the peoples of this area, just as it does to the peoples of Europe.

The FRG foreign minister referred to Reagan and Gorbachev's meeting in Reykjavik and said that the two leaders had recognized the need for the two superpowers to avoid confrontation and destructive weapons and to move toward cooperation for the welfare of mankind. He said that this expresses a new concept for the promotion of cooperation and a new spirit which must dominate all international issues.

Genscher also expressed the hope that the Washington summit will end with the same spirit of hope which dominated the Reykjavik summit.

Genscher underlined the need to avoid a chemical war, saying that such weapons are no less dangerous than nuclear weapons. He explained that Europe's great aim is to achieve stability and peace for all Europe so that all countries with different ideas can live side by side without fear and poverty and so that Europe can live in security and peace.

Genscher added: Europe, both East and West, which has seen wars on its soil and from where many wars spread to many areas of the world, must give an example of peace. Peace initiatives should emanate from it. This is our common responsibility.

Genscher announced that the Soviet and American leaders will meet again in Moscow in the spring.

Concludes Visit, Departs

NC082127 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher left Cairo tonight at the conclusion of a 1-day visit to Egypt. During his visit, Genscher was received by President Husni Mubarak; Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi; Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production; and Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister. The German official's talks focused on the Middle East situation and bilateral relations.

PLO Delegation Arrives in Cairo on Visit

NC082133 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2035 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—A PLO delegation led by Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu Mazin, which includes PLO Executive Committee members Mahmud Darwish and 'Abdallah al-Hurani, arrived in Cairo tonight on a 3-day visit.

The delegation will meet with Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi; Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and head of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

The Palestinian delegation was received at the airport by Foreign Ministry Counsellor Ambassador Ahmad al-Khatib.

Beninese Information Minister Continues Visit

Information Protocol Signed

NC081615 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Excerpt] An information cooperation protocol was signed today between Egypt and Benin. The protocol provides for cooperation in the exchange of radio and television programs and an exchange of experts and training scholarships in the field of information. It also provides for the exchange of visits by media officials and technicians. The protocol was signed for Egypt by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif and for Benin by Information Minister Ali Houdou. [passage omitted]

Minister Departs 9 Dec

NC090811 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0725 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Excerpt] Cairo, 9 Dec (MENA)—Beninese Information Minister Ali Houdou left Cairo this morning after a 10-day visit to Egypt. During his visit, he met with President Husni Mubarak, Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi, and Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif. [passage omitted]

Sri Lankan Defense Minister Arrives on Visit

NC082130 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1945 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—Sri Lanka's defense minister, General Atulat Modili [name and title as received], and his wife arrived in Cairo this afternoon on a visit that is scheduled to last several days. He was received at the airport by Major General Faruq 'Abd al-'Azim, commander of the Central Zone, and Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Cairo Perry Desanayaka.

UN Official Concludes 2-Day Visit, Departs

NC090913 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0855 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Cairo, 9 Dec (MENA)—Marrack Goulding, UN under secretary general for political affairs, left Cairo this morning after a 2-day visit during which he discussed the convening of an international peace conference and the role of the United Nations in this connection. The UN official met with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Dr Usamah al-Baz, director of the President's Office for Political Affairs; Ambassador 'Amr Musa, director of the International Organizations Department at the Foreign Ministry; and Ambassador Ahmad Mahir, director of the Foreign Ministry Legal Department.

Albanian Minister, Delegation Leave Cairo

NC081224 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0955 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Excerpt] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—Xhemal Tafaj, Albanian trade and industry minister [title as received], and the delegation accompanying him left Cairo for home this morning after a 6-day visit. [passage omitted]

Economy Minister on Foreign Currency Market

JN082037 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 4 Dec 87 pp 12-13

[Report on an interview with Dr Yusri Mustafa, minister of economy and foreign trade, by Safa' Louis; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] In the next few days the banking market will witness a new series of monetary and financial decisions to correct the course of the economy. The most serious and important of these will be the unification of the price set by the commercial banks group and that set by the foreign currency market, as well as the transfer of transactions on yarn and textile exports, which amount to $260 million, to the foreign currency market.

There are also other decisions aimed at financing private sector debts under certain specific regulations and facilitating and financing the requirements of pilgrimage, tourism, and small pilgrimage. How will these decisions affect the national economy? What will be the effect on low income people? Dr Yusri Mustafa, minister of economy and foreign trade, answered these questions when I interviewed him.

At first, I asked Dr Yusri Mustafa now, 7 years after the establishment of the foreign currency market, what has this market given the Egyptian economy and how far has it gone to absorb foreign currency transactions in the public and private sectors?

He replied: In the early stage, the foreign currency market, which was established on 11 May 1987, absorbed about 40 percent of the public sector's import transactions and 100 percent of the private sector's. Later, other public sector transactions were transferred to this market, raising them to more than 60 percent. Recently, the Ministry of Economy issued Decision No (536) of 1987, transferring more public sector transactions from the commercial banks group to the foreign currency market. These are estimated at 20 percent of the total transactions. Therefore, we can say that the foreign currency market has so far succeeded in absorbing 80 percent of the public sector's entire transactions and all the private sector's transactions.

Regarding revenues, we transferred first transactions on several export commodities and invisible revenues such as remittances of Egyptians working abroad and revenues from tourism. In the second stage, we transferred transactions on commodity exports by the public and private sectors and also invisible revenues. Other invisible revenues such as services were transferred to this market. The transfer of all these transactions to the foreign currency market provides ample proof that the market has achieved the desired objectives.

I asked: What other investments and revenues have not yet been transferred to the foreign currency market but are expected to be transferred soon and which constitute 20 percent of the public sector's total transactions in foreign currency?

He said: The remainder of these transactions will be transferred in light of our observation of the transactions that are currently being concluded through the foreign currency market. We can generally say that we will transfer a number of export commodities, headed by our yarn and textile exports, which total $245 million annually. This will bolster the market because the revenues from this sector are greater than the investments, which total $100 million annually.

I asked: Why has the foreign currency market failed to finance private sector debts, a request that was made a long time ago because of the importers' inability to find the necessary foreign currency to pay these debts, especially in light of the acute crisis between the banks and the importers, and the latters' decision to stop making payments?

He said: The ministry, in cooperation with the Central Bank, has completed the drafting of a suitable formula to tackle this matter. The formula will be announced soon.

I asked: Will there be a rescheduling of debts as some officials in the Union of Banks have said?

He answered: We as a government, a Ministry of Economy, or even Central Bank, do not interfere in rescheduling. This is a private affair between the client and the bank. [passage omitted]

I said: When will the unification take place between the price set by the commercial banks group price and the price set by the foreign currency market?

He answered: The foreign currency market is in continuous evolution, and I imagine that by the beginning of 1988 we will be able to witness the complete unification of the foreign currency market price with that of the commercial banks group. By that time, the banking market will have been able to absorb the financing of all transactions in foreign currency with the exception of the transactions that are normally financed by the Central Bank. We have already begun a study on how to transfer certain transactions to the foreign currency market, mainly those affecting strategic commodities such as vegetable oil, sugar, corn, flour, tea, and the servicing of debts. [passage omitted]

I asked: Some economists have asserted that the foreign currency market exchange rate is not a true reflection of the supply and demand on the dollar. They said that the dollar is priced higher than its real value and people fear that this value might turn into a fixed book value unrelated in any way to the process of supply and demand. They said that the free market price of the dollar has been fluctuating between 216 and 222 [piasters] for more than 6 months now. They fear that experiences of the commercial banks group might be repeated in the foreign currency market.

He said: The exchange rate is fixed by a committee formed by the banks. There is no government interference in the work of this committee or attempts to impose a certain price on it. The Ministry of Economy and the Central Bank only attend as observers. This price reflects the supply and demand on the commodities that are financed through the foreign currency market, not the supply and demand on foreign currencies in the Egyptian market in particular. [passage omitted]

Liberal's Abu Isma'il Withdraws Resignation

PM081557 Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic
7 Dec 87 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Salah Abu Isma'il's Resignation Rejected"]

[Text] The Liberal Party has rejected the resignation submitted by the party's deputy leader and People's Assembly member Shaykh Salah Abu Isma'il in protest against some of the party's internal regulations. A meeting was held between party leader Mustafa Kamil Murad, some of the party's other leading figures, and Shaykh Abu Isma'il in the presence of Socialist Labor Party leader and People's Assembly opposition leader Ibrahim Shukri. At the end of the discussion, Shaykh Abu Isma'il agreed to withdraw his resignation.

Libya

Arab League Envoy Criticizes Iranian Demand

LD091130 Kuwait KUNA in English 0914 GMT
9 Dec 87

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Dec 9 (KUNA)—Libya's permanent representative at the Arab League 'Abd al-'Ati al-'Ubaydi was quoted here Wednesday as saying Iran should drop its demand for identifying the war aggressor as a precondition for ending the war. "Priority should go to putting out the flames of the conflict, and not identifying the party that had started it," the envoy told AL-ITTIHAD newspaper.

He said the Jamahiriyah would side with any Arab country coming under aggression and he stressed Tripoli was opposed to expanding the conflict to embroil neutral states.

Turning to relations with Tunis, the official said the two North African Arab states would resume full relations later this month. Al-'Ubaydi pointed out that joint committees from the two countries would be meeting today to lay frameworks for future cooperation.

He indicated Tripoli would be hosting a meeting of Arab opposition parties towards the middle of this month and a second assembly of ruling parties in the Arab world by the end of the month.

Agenda items of the two conferences, he added, would be confined to five topics. These are the Iran-Iraq war, the international peace conference on the Mideast, relations with Egypt, the Sahara conflict and finally means of scoring [as received] Arab unity.

The Libyan representative said, meanwhile, his country was continuing mediation between Syria and the PLO and between different Palestinian factions within the PLO including those loyal and opposed to Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

He noted that an Iraqi diplomatic team was currently in Tripoli to work out arrangements for the upcoming opening of an Iraqi Embassy in the Libyan capital in the wake of a decision earlier this year to resume full diplomatic ties.

Mauritania

Exiled Opposition Groups Condemn Executions

AB081654 London BBC World Service in English 1615 GMT 8 Dec 87

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[Text] Mauritanian opposition groups have reacted strongly to the execution over the weekend of three black Army officers accused of involvement in an abortive coup. The exiled movements, which have members in Senegal, believe that the severity of the sentences signals the desire by the government in Nouakchott to deal once and for all with the black opposition which is suspected by some Mauritanian Arabs of having violent and separatist aims. In Dakar, Kader Dioup has been contacted by two of the exiled opposition groups. He cabled this report:

[Begin recording] Mauritania's black African movements, which denounced the sentences as a maneuver designed to split the country's black community, see the verdict as being unjustified. More especially, according to a spokesman of the Forces for the African Liberation of Mauritania, FLAM, even supposing that there had been a coup plot, not a shot had been fired nor anyone wounded. FLAM, therefore, believes the execution of the three black officers constitutes an open declaration of war by the Arab-dominated government on the black community and urged Mauritanian patriots to overthrow the current regime.

Like FLAM, another underground party, the Movement Against Apartheidization of Mauritania, Mocam, which recently surfaced for the first time, states that it has never been a question of their planning a large-scale massacre of the population anymore than it has been to proclaim their own separate republic.

In a communique published in Dakar before the death of the three officers, Mocam warned that any execution of blacks would lead irrevocably to countermeasures against the perpetrators of such actions and will in effect be just like putting a match to a gunpowder store.

Since both FLAM and Mocam are underground movements, it is difficult to judge exactly how much political impact the movements have here. The Mauritanian authorities clearly believe it is insignificant. But it seems that the movements which recruit their members mainly from circles of young intellectuals do reflect the general feelings of the black community, especially when it comes to actions such as speaking out against government reforms aimed at the Arabization of Mauritania's education system.

Observers here point out that those officers who were executed were not particularly well known to the general public and that the only black personalites, such as Colonel Anne Amodou Babaly and Captain Djibril Diop, received relatively light sentences.

Whatever other effect the executions may have, they will considerably reduce the recruitment of blacks into the Mauritanian Army. They may also crystallize black discontent, especially in the south of the country where the commissioning of a series of large dams on the Senegal River has led the population to believe their land will be expropriated by the Arabs. Observers here also think that repression of the black population might, in the end, make their political movements more popular, movements which do not speak of black separatism but rather demand more justice at all levels of the Mauritanian administration. [end recording]

Sudan

Libyan Envoy Refutes Reports on Breaking Ties

JN091156 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1044 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Khartoum, 9 Dec (SUNA)—The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah has affirmed its full appreciation of the good relations that exist between itself and Sudan. It declared that these ties and the close friendship between the two fraternal peoples are too strong to be affected by rumors repeated every now and then.

In a statement published today in AL-ITTIHAD, Khalifah Ahmad al-Haddad, member of the People's Committee for Cultural and Information Affairs at the Libyan Arab Brotherhood Bureau—the Libyan Embassy—in Khartoum, asserts that recent reports in some Khartoum newspapers on Libya's intention to break relations with Sudan are completely groundless. He maintains that Libya never considered such a decision since there is nothing to warrant it.

Khalifah adds that it is natural for entry and exit procedures between states and governments for their citizens, including officials, to exist.

The Libyan official says the fact that Sudanese officials refused to grant an entry visa to a Libyan official is normal. He added that the Jamahiriyah fully respects Sudan's internal policy and that it supports good-neighborly relations based on respect for national sovereignty and noninterference in the affairs of others.

Khalifah accuses certain quarters, "without naming them," of seeking to undermine the good and excellent relations between Sudan and the Jamahiriyah. He adds that ties between the two countries will flourish and grow.

AL-ADWA', on the front page of its 5 December issue, had highlighted a report claiming that Libya had threatened to break relations with Sudan after Sudanese security officials refused to allow a Libyan to enter Sudan. AL-ADWA' reported that the Libyan was returned home aboard the same plane that brought him to the country. According to AL-ADWA', Libyan officials were not permitted to contact any Sudanese authorities by telephone to discuss this matter prior to the aircraft's departure. Sudanese officials considered this Libyan to be a security risk.

AL-ADWA' also added that although he was denied entry to Sudan several times, this Libyan was included in several official Libyan delegations that visited Khartoum, in order to embarrass Sudan. The newspaper additionally reported that due to this incident, increased tension in relations between the two countries is expected.

Khartoum Attempt To Retake Kurmuk 'Crushed'

EA081619 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English
1300 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] The spokesman of the SPLM-SPLA Political-Military High Command has told Radio SPLA that another desperate attempt by Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi to recapture Kurmuk has been crushed on 5 December 1987 at (Mafau), 15 km west of Kurmuk, the second in less than 1 week. Correspondent for the Radio SPLA in Kurmuk says that the latest force of Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was badly defeated and withdrew in disarray to Wadega, further to the west of Kurmuk town, where they were pursued and engaged the following day by the SPLA forces. Heavy fighting is reported to be in progress.

The spokesman of the SPLA Military High Command says that another attempt by Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's forces to recapture Kurmuk is under preparation in Ad-Damazin and that the SPLA intelligence have details of the recent location and strength of the force. The spokesman maintained that the situation is being monitored closely and, like the other two previous forces, this force of Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi will be wiped out in an appropriate killing zone.

The spokesman dismissed as patently absurd Khartoum government's claim that they had killed 200 SPLA soldiers about 1 km from Kurmuk by using only 144 commandos, who, according to Khartoum, had withdrawn due to lack of water.

This makes no military sense nor even common sense, said the spokesman. The truth is that SPLA has captured the strategic town of Kurmuk in Southern Blue Nile after 3 days of heavy and fierce fighting. Following the capture of Kurmuk, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi vowed that he would recapture it immediately and that he would attend the OAU debt summit of the 30th [November] 1987 after he recaptured Kurmuk. Consequently, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi committed two reinforced infantry brigades to recapture Kurmuk by his self-imposed deadline of 30 November 1987. Fighting started on the 28th of November 1987 and the two brigades were defeated and dispersed on 1 December 1987 after suffering heavy losses in tanks, artillery, trucks, and men.

As a result, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi canceled attending the OAU debt summit and alleged foreign intervention. Again on the 5th of December 1987, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's attempt to recapture Kurmuk was beaten back and SPLA is on full alert to defeat another similar attempt and to advance on Ad-Damazin.

The spokesman went on to say that SPLA is in full control of the situation in Kurmuk and that Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi does not know how to explain it to the Sudanese people and to his foreign backers, who expected too much out of this small, arrogant man, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, who has nothing but disaster to contribute to Sudan.

This crisis of confidence in Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi explains the many escapes [as heard] for Western and Arab assistance, said the spokesman, adding that the SPLA wishes to make it clear that not a single foreign soldier participated in the battle for Kurmuk. None has ever done so in the past and none will in the future, as the SPLA considers the conflict as a purely Sudanese affair and must not be internationalized or rationalized as Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi very desperately wants to do.

The spokesman advised the U.S. Army general visiting Khartoum to hear SPLA's side before drawing conclusions from the stories of the Khartoum's rulers.

Al-Mahdi on IMF, Southern Talks, Foreign Ties

PM081227 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
2-8 Dec 87 pp 16-18

[Interview with Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi by "N.F." in Khartoum; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-MAJALLAH] During the elections, the Sudanese people rallied around the new government. They were happy with their new democracy and hoped that economic, security, and living conditions would improve. Today a visitor to Sudan would notice that the people are suffering a sort of frustration, that prices of consumer goods have increased considerably, and that many basic services are deteriorating. When I asked one person about the cause of his frustration, he replied: "If

you ask Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, he will tell you he is frustrated, too." Why is it that three successive governments within 18 months were unable to realize some of the aspirations of the Sudanese people? And how would you assess the previous stage?

[Al-Mahdi] The hopes of the people cannot be realized over only 1 year. Anyone who thinks this is possible is deluding himself, or he is a fiction writer or a magician, since this is not really possible. The first stage was dominated by fine, empty hopes, but the present stage is reality. Both stages actually represent the reality that Sudan is experiencing. For the record, we believe—and this is no mere claim—that great achievements were made in Sudan over the past 18 months, even during this difficult situation we are undergoing. It is true that these achievements are not matchless, but it was impossible to attain anything better. [passage omitted]

[AL-MAJALLAH] The economic program that your government adopted resulted in an agreement with the IMF. This pact stirred up harsh reactions among ordinary Sudanese, as well as among the opposition. If this was the ideal solution, why then is there all this rejection?

[Al-Mahdi] There are certain reasons behind these reactions, some of which are political. In Sudan there are parties whose main concern is to oppose things. Consequently, they oppose anything that the government does. Many of those who objected to this agreement had in fact lost their credibility, for they were partners in the previous regime. That government ended up much worse than this one, but these people did not express any reservations about the agreements that regime had made. Some opposed them out of ignorance. Sudan cannot simply wait for economic reform to automatically take place. The economy is an objective matter: What will we pay the deficit with? The answer is not in our hands, whether we have agreed with the IMF or not. Some people believed that the IMF imposed these terms on us. I support these terms, whether or not we agree, for we need a method with which we can pay off our deficit. We chose to establish relations with the IMF.

[AL-MAJALLAH] It is being said that some Western states pressured Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi to negotiate with the IMF and that there is a political price for such an agreement.

[Al-Mahdi] All governments and states want us to agree with the IMF. They did not exert any pressure, but they considered us to be outside international dealings. Furthermore, we wanted an agreement with the IMF, but not at any price. We reached an agreement that we will defend, for this pact will reform our economy. Some of those discussing this issue are in fact ignorant; they believe that we can do anything we want to. This is an opinion that is both unrealistic and unobjective. [passage omitted]

[AL-MAJALLAH] Let us return to the issue of the south. Some analysts believe that if your government can solve the problem of the south, it will then be able to begin resolving the crisis now embroiling Sudan. Consequently, any solution outside this context will leave Sudan economically exhausted. Why has your government not yet managed to find a solution?

[Al-Mahdi] (Adjusting his headdress and smiling) If it were simply a matter of hopes, the problem would have been resolved. It is in fact this government that has made the strongest and most intensive and important efforts to solve the southern problem. Numayri created this problem, while the transitional government only occasionally raised the issue. We have proceeded along three [as published] main channels: First, a solution to this difficulty must be political and cover four main issues: religion and politics, Arab-African affiliation, fair distribution of wealth, and a fair divison of power. This problem must then be discussed radically so we can achieve what we term the Sudanese charter. All these things are new; they did not exist in Sudanese politics before this. We can now say that the vision is clear on ways to achieve a peaceful solution, the form of the constitutional conference, and its working program. [passage omitted]

[AL-MAJALLAH] Will John Garang be part of this solution, or will the solution you are discussing...

[Al-Mahdi] The objective of all this is to improve relations between us and them. He will be part of the solution.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Since Garang will be part of the solution, and since this solution, according to what you stated earlier, is now imminent, why then was the common slogan of your rally and that of the Islamic National Front hostile to Garang? And why did you classify Garang as a foreign enemy?

[Al-Mahdi] First of all, I stated that preparations have been made for the agreements. As to whether or not there will be an agreement, this depends on a number of factors. We are working to make them a success. Garang's movement is mainly supported from the outside. However, this does not mean that we do not want to reach a joint agreement with it or with those supporting it.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Why don't you speak more frankly or clearly? Who supports John Garang and which foreign states are you referring to?

[Al-Mahdi] I do not want to discuss this issue in detail, for it is very sensitive. [passage omitted]

[AL-MAJALLAH] Numerous states were optimistic when Al-Mahdi resumed the premiership. This is because they believed that due to your foreign and diplomatic relationships, you could achieve a great deal

for Sudanese foreign policy. However, after 18 months, Sudan is almost isolated and is additionally involved in disputes with a number of its neighbors. How would you assess Sudan's foreign policy during your rule? Also, in your opinion, has the policy of neutrality that you proposed succeeded? Is there even any neutrality?

[Al-Mahdi] (After taking a deep breath) During Numayri's era, Sudan belonged to the Western camp; it had a regional bloc and was classified as such. Now we do not belong to any quarter, for we do not believe in blocs. In general, our relations with all countries are good. This is with the exception of the states that we have problems with, due to the support they give the rebels in the south. These difficulties will soon be resolved. I do not believe that we are currently dealing with any neighboring state, whether Arab, African, Western, or Islamic, on the basis of hostility. It is true that we do not maintain special relations with any of these states. This is the price we have paid for preserving our ties with everyone.

[AL-MAJALLAH] But Sudan maintains special relations with Libya, for example...

[Al-Mahdi] These are all relations that are part of mutual interests. However, we have not entered into a joint diplomatic, joint political, or joint military agreement with any state.

[AL-MAJALLAH] It is being said that a joint defensive agreement will soon be concluded between Sudan and Libya, but that the announcement of this has been postponed due to advice from some Sudanese military commanders.

[Al-Mahdi] This is against our policy. It is idle talk. During his popular visit [to Sudan], Abu Bakr Yunis [Jabir] met with me and military officials in his capacity as commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces. We had no points of disagreement. Our commitment is: We do not seek to conclude any agreement of a military nature with any quarter, either with Libya or with others.

[AL-MAJALLAH] That may be so, but perhaps the reason for this was the four MIG aircraft that suddenly arrived at Khartoum airport one morning.

[Al-Mahdi] Those aircraft were given as a gift to Sudan during the period of the transitional government. They had been out of action, so we received some spare parts for them. We are dealing with all states to strengthen our Armed Forces. However, the point I am refuting is that there are any special agreements concerning either joint defensive or joint offensive operations. Sudan now enjoys free decisionmaking with regard to its foreign policy. [passage omitted]

English Paper, Information Offices Planned

EA082338 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] It goes without saying that the media perform a great role in building society and the social movement accompanying this (?system). The truthful media that impartially perform their task constitute one of the mainstays of encouraging a favorable climate for building any society, by enlightening public opinion on various matters affecting that society. [passage omitted]

Since the uprising and the launching of the new democratic order in the country, the rebel movement has continued its aggression. Even after the May regime [of Numayri] fell, some foreign media have persisted in spreading biased rumors about the democratic moves of Sudan, our internal efforts to build Sudanese society, and our foreign policy, which is committed to all the principles and charters of international and regional organizations. These campaigns were ordered by [word indistinct], with some foreign quarters supporting the rebel movement. In order to advance aims and strategies totally opposed to the interests of Sudan, some dishonest information sectors were used to give legitimacy to the rebel movement, as well as to cast doubt on the integrity of the Sudanese Government. This government, by the way, was brought into being by the will of the people. [passage omitted]

The state must seriously consider supporting and enhancing the role of the media in various parts of the world. The state has accordingly announced that it will establish information sections attached to our embassies around the world. These will serve the Sudanese cause by explaining Sudan's internal and external policies. The minister of culture and information has stated: The coming days will witness the opening of the first information section at our embassy in Nairobi. This will be followed by others sections at other embassies.

His excellency the minister also said that an English-language newspaper would be published to provide international public opinion with the facts on political events in Sudan. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Ben Ali Appoints Party Political Bureau

LD081303 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] At the Republican Palace in Carthage this morning, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, chairman of the Socialist Destourian Party, chaired a meeting of the think-tank committee which he recently entrusted with looking into

the present and the future of the party and collating all the opinions and proposals to this effect before the meeting of the party Central Committee in the first three months of 1988.

During the session, the agenda for party meetings in the various provinces of the Republic, to be held under the patronage of members of the Political Bureau and of the government, was drawn up. The party chairman also decided to form the Political Bureau as follows:

Hedi Baccouche, secretary general of the party.

Dr Hamed Karoui, director of the Party.

Slaheddine Baly, treasurer of the party.

Habib Ammar, Mahmoud Mestiri, Sadok Benjomaa, Abderrazak Kefi, Abdallah Kalal, Mohamed Karboul, Abderrahim Zouari, Abdelmalek Arif, and Amor Bejaoui, members.

The party chairman has also decided to create the following four committees:

1. The committee for the party's general orientations, chaired by Abderrazak Kefi.

2. The committee for the party's action program, chaired by Dr Hamed Karoui.

3. The committee for the party's structures, chaired by Abderrahim Zouari.

4. The youth committee, chaired by Mohamed Karboul.

Measures for Southern Development Adopted
LD050924 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1600 GMT 4 Dec 87

[Text] In embodiment of the 7 November statement, in an endeavor to enhance and extend development in the Tunisian south, and in an effort to halt unemployment, mainly among the young, his excellency the president of the Republic, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, devoted the working session held this afternoon at the Republic Palace in Carthage, in the presence of Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche and a number of government members and the governors of the south, to a study of the development of this region. During the session, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali adopted the following measures and regulations, which will be implemented immediately:

Speeding up the implementation of integrated projects, consisting mainly in drilling 468 surface wells, preparing irrigation canals over 125 km in length, multiplying efforts in connection with water economy and land amelioration, improving pastures, and developing the livestock sector. Supplementary credits amounting to 6 million dinars are to be assigned for this purpose.

Giving priority to small and medium farmers in benefiting from the facilities of the special fund for agricultural services with easy and attractive conditions.

Canceling the debts of publicly-owned water associations.

Extending the prerogatives of the national fund of traditional jobs and skills for the benefit of some commerical activities to back and promote agricultural products and traditional skills.

Encouraging regional economic institutions, which currently face some difficulties.

Assigning supplementary credit amounting to 1 million dinars for the preservation of basic equipment and public buildings.

Establishing supplementary credit amounting to 400,000 dinars to equip and exploit medium-sized and deep wells, in addition to the credit provided under this chapter for the south which amounts to 1.3 million dinars.

Providing supplementary credit amounting to 1 million dinars to combat desertification.

The state's general budget will handle these supplementary credits mainly from the sums resulting from the cancellation of worthless projects in some towns.

Beside these urgent regulations, his excellency the president of the Republic adopted the following measures for 1988:

Speeding up the financing of infrastructure development in the south and defining integrated programms of rural development.

Provinding credits with the banking apparatus for the financing of worthwhile projects.

Securing a better running of the health institutions in the southern governorates by supplying a larger number of general practitioners in these regions.

The new short-term or long-term projects, made necessary by these measures, are in addition to the projects being implemented within their defined schedules within the framework of the seventh plan and are part of an added endeavor to implement them all.

Ben Ali Receives Former Trade Union Leader

LD060612 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 0000 GMT 6 Dec 87

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met with Mr Habib Achour [former secretary general of the General Union of Tunisian Workers] yesterday at the Republic Palace in Carthage in the presence of Hedi Baccouche, the prime minister.

This was another opportunity for his excellency to confirm his eagerness to see the new era, which Tunisia entered on 7 November, give consideration again to all those who have contributed to the national struggle and who have helped lay down the foundations of the Tunisian state.

After the meeting, Habib Achour declared: "I paid to his excellency the president a courtesy visit which was an opportunity for us to discuss all the issues evoked by the 7 November statement. After talking with his excellency, I am convinced that he is determined to implement what was contained in this statement. This will have a far-reaching effect in the minds of the citizens because it seeks to provide the means of subsistence in prosperity and freedom."

President, Communist Party Chief Hold Talks

LD041448 Tunis TAP in Arabic 1230 GMT 4 Dec 87

[Text] Carthage, 4 Dec (TAP)—President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received today, in the presence of Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche, Mohamed Harmel, secretary general of the Tunisian Communist Party. In a statement after the meeting, Mr Harmel described his talks with the head of state as cordial and serious. He said that they had discussed a variety of essential issues concerning the current circumstances in the country.

The secretary general of the Communist Party pointed out that it was agreed to continue the dialogue over all problems, political, economic, and social, adding that he had presented to President Ben Ali proposals and opinions on approaches toward solving problems, giving substance to the democratic orientation carried by the 7 November declaration and emphasizing that his party supports the contents of this declaration.

Mr Harmel concluded: I met with understanding and an interest over a number of issues, which encourages us to continue the march, the march of Tunisia and its passage from one era to a new historical era.

Kuwait

'Text' of Amir's Messages to Reagan, Gorbachev

LD071210 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 7 Dec 87

[Text] The amir of Kuwait has sent messages to U.S. President Ronald Reagan and CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev on the occasion of their bilateral summit. The following is the text of the message which the amir sent to each of them:

Your bilateral summit captures the full attention of international governments and peoples. It has also aroused the optimism of all the peace- and security-loving peoples in this world, which throughout its regions is fraught with wars, disturbances, and economic crises. The world looks forward to further steps in the wake of your agreement on eliminating medium-range missiles in Europe. It hopes that international and regional issues on humanitarian questions will receive your attention.

I have received your message, in which you expressed your good feelings, in my capacity as president of the current session of the ICO. I extend to your excellency all feelings of appreciation and greetings.

I hope that since you are at the threshold of a new stage in the dialogue between the two superpowers, you will consider the international and regional issues that preoccupy the thoughts of millions of peoples in our contemporary world.

Indeed, from a practical point of view, there is no longer any dividing line between regional and international issues. There is hardly a regional issue that the great powers have not had a hand in or an effect on. There is hardly any world or regional meeting whose agenda does not include comprehensive issues concerning humanity and looking upon man as an entity with rights and dignity. This is in addition to regional issues that in total form the outlook of humanity.

Foremost of these issues are those of national liberation and the rights of the peoples to self-determination and to a secure life in their countries, without aggression by them or against them, and without interference in their internal affairs. The most prominent are those of the Palestinian people, the Lebanese people, the Namibian people, the oppressed African majority in the Republic of South Africa, the Afghan people, the peoples of Southeast Asia, the peoples of Latin America, and the peoples of the Carribean.

Each of these peoples has rights that come under the heading of human rights. Your bilateral summit can help to build a strong bridge between the international charters and their implementation through cooperation in this regard with international organizations, especially the United Nations.

We are living under a dual system of humanity, but look forward to a unified system of humanity. The world now consists of two worlds: the advanced, rich, creditor North, and the backward, poor, debtor South, with its varied degrees of backwardness and growth. While humanity has succeeded in breaking the shackles of the old serfdom and in declaring human rights, the debts of the developing countries now form new shackles. These have converted individual slavery into comprehensive social and economic serfdom.

The creditor countries have daily tightened their grip on the destinies of the debtor nations. They have robbed the freedom of the current generation and the hopes of future generations.

There is also a danger that threatens us all as human beings, both rich and poor, advanced and backward. By this I mean the continued pollution of the natural environment in which we live, in which our forefathers have lived, and in which we want our children to live.

Scientific progress and backwardness are together threatening the environmental balance and the land, air, and sea. The human march is passing on a dangerous road between the excessive use of industrial components in the advanced countries and the excessive consumption of natural resources in the pasturelands and woods of the poor countries. Pollution in rivers, the soil, and the atmosphere is increasing. The contaminated clouds move from one country to another over the mountains and seas in the North, while drought, starvation, and famine spread in the South. This is so common that the rivers of Central Africa and those in parts of Asia and Latin America are threatened with contamination, while their rains are becoming scarce.

This poses a threat that is no less dangerous than that of war. While sincere voices have been calling for the protection of the environment and the need to adopt positive steps to combat drought and desertification, as well as the threat of famine and death inherent in them, the bilateral meeting between the two superpowers has elements that convert it into a universal platform for adopting positive measures in this regard.

We in the Arab Gulf region still recall the UN Security Council resolution on the Iraq-Iran war that you have contributed to. We hope that you will take positive steps to end this destructive conflict that consumes lives and property and that is threatening to expand. We hope the Gulf will once more enjoy the peace that reigned over it for centuries—without its sons entertaining regional ambitions or expansionist objectives—as all different peoples lived in friendship and understanding.

As we address this message to you in your meeting, which represents the two superpowers in our modern world, we as Muslims believe that the ultimate right rests with God Almighty, the creator of everything, Who called upon us to adhere to a comprehensive human

fraternity and to believe in the dignity of man. It was for this dignity that the United Nations was created; it is this dignity that the ICO has called for. This dignity is the hope of humanity in its march toward its future.

If science, in which your country represents a high apex, has succeeded in reaching the horizons of outer space, we hope that your meeting will reach the depth of the human soul and listen to its true need for security, progress, and peace.

Please accept my most sincere greetings and best wishes.

Pakistani Prime Minister Meets With Amir

LD081129 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0942 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Kuwait, 8 Dec (KUNA)—Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo met with Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah today before noon.

The meeting was attended by the official delegation accompanying the Pakistani guest. No information is as yet available on the nature of the talks, but it is believed that the two sides discussed bilateral relations and the latest developments in the Gulf. They also covered issues of common interest.

Kuwait is the last leg of the tour that Mr Junejo is making to a number of states in the Arabian Gulf. These included Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The Pakistani prime minister had earlier held a round of talks with the heir apparent and prime minister, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah.

Views Gulf War, Nuclear Policy

JN082003 Kuwait KUWAIT TIMES in English 7 Dec 87 p 6

["Long distance" interview with Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo by KUWAIT TIMES managing editor A.B.S. Jafri; date and place not given]

[Text] Q: What status and significance do you accord to Kuwait in your foreign policy?

A: We accord a very high priority to our relations with Kuwait. Kuwait is a brotherly country with which we have always maintained close friendly and fraternal relations. Bilateral collaboration between our two countries is quite extensive in every field and high level exchange of visits and consultations between the leaders of the two countries are a prominent feature of Pakistan-Kuwait relations.

Q. As a major Muslim state, and in close proximity with the Muslim Middle East region, what role has Pakistan played so far to bring the Iran-Iraq conflict to an end?

A: The Iran-Iraq war is a major problem facing the Islamic world. Pakistan is greatly concerned and has shown its concern from the very inception of this war by taking active part in the efforts of the Islamic Peace Committee [IPC] to seek an early settlement of the fratricidal war. Besides playing a role as a member of the IPC, we have in our bilateral contacts with the countries concerned tried, on the one hand to defuse tension and on the other to promote understanding. We have used every opportunity to counsel caution and restraint to all concerned and we feel that our efforts have succeeded to some extent in containing the escalation. We will continue to pursue this objective which, we feel, would help the efforts of the secretary general of the United Nations to find a peaceful end to this war.

Q: What would you say to those who perceive and regret a pro-Iran tilt in your government's policies?

A: To them we say that your understanding and perception of Pakistan's stand on this tragic conflict is incorrect. Pakistan has strictly followed the course of neutrality. At the same time we have played an active role as a member of the IPC to bring a just and comprehensive settlement of this war. It is because of our genuine neutrality and sincere efforts to promote peace and contain this conflict that our relations with both sides have remained by and large unaffected. We are continuing to exert efforts to defuse the current tension in the Gulf and those who know the role we have played appreciate our contribution.

Q: Pakistan has been a steadfast friend and loyal ally of the United States. Why is it that the United States not only refuses to trust you when you solemnly assure you are not intending to make a nuclear bomb, but goes on to take the punitive action of discontinuing economic aid?

A: Pakistan fully shares U.S. concerns regarding nuclear proliferation in South Asia. In fact, we took the lead in raising the global consciousness about the threat of nuclear proliferation in South Asia following India's nuclear explosion in 1974.

Since then we have followed a long campaign to seek a practical end to this threat by offering a series of initiatives to India aimed at seeking a bilateral or regional nonproliferation regime. We feel that the regional or bilateral approach which imposes equal restraints or limitations on the countries involved, particularly India and Pakistan, offers the best of prospects of success.

A section of U.S. Congressional opinion has adopted an unfair attitude by demanding unilateral inspection or verification of Pakistan's nuclear facilities which is unacceptable for a variety of reasons. By focusing on Pakistan it may underline that the threat to proliferation in the region emanates perhaps from Pakistan, which is far from the truth. Besides, it derogates from our sovereignty and national self-respect and last, but not least, it

would send a wrong signal to India. We feel that acceptance of unilateral and discriminatory limitation by us would remove any leverage vis-a-vis India in securing a bilateral or regional nonproliferation regime thus lifting all restraints on India's nuclear programme. The demand for inspection is therefore, not only unfair and inequitable but would also not achieve the ends of nonproliferation.

At the same time we are encouraged by the fact that our consistent stand on the issue has resulted in an appreciation within the administration and the Congress of our initiatives at the regional level and in the bilateral Indo-Pakistan context. The regional approach has been endorsed by both the administration and several members of Congress. They are of the view that a lasting solution to the issue lay in dialogue between India and Pakistan leading to significant non-proliferation steps. Recently, this was reiterated by Ambassador Kennedy, State Department's expert on nonproliferation, while testifying before Congressional Committees. He stated that regional approach to nonproliferation remained a viable option for resolving the problem even though India has not responded to Pakistan's proposals.

In actual fact the gap between the United States and Pakistan on the nuclear issue is not so unbridgeable. Our differences centre on approach to nonproliferation and not on the degree of commitment.

I would like to reiterate, however, that Pakistan's nuclear programme remains modest and peaceful. We have neither the intention nor the desire to produce nuclear weapons.

The political commitment of my government is the best assurance that it will not develop nuclear weapons. We cannot accede to demands which derive from assumptions that question our solemn commitment. Such concessions would offend our dignity and impinge on our sovereignty. They would be inequitable in comparison to the obligations accepted by our neighbour, India.

Q: Is it correct to say that Indo-Pakistan relations which were seen as improving two years ago are again under increasing strains? If so, why and what your government proposes to do to arrest the deterioration?

A: The president and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had a frank and constructive dialogue on Dec 17, 1985. They addressed themselves to a cluster of important issues and took a number of decisions, foremost among which was the understanding prohibiting attack on each other's nuclear facilities and installations. The meeting generated expectations that the normalisation process would gather momentum. The beginning of 1986 did see a brief intensification of contacts between the two countries but then India seemed to back away from the conclusive stage of discussion on various issues e.g. merger of proposed text of a Non-Aggression Pact and a Treaty of Friendship, Siachen Glacier and the Joint Commission. Pakistan's response was to make a number of proposals designed to promote mutual trust and confidence between the two countries. Pakistan in particular reiterated assurances of non-interference in India's internal affairs, especially Punjab.

In order to resuscitate the normalisation process we have taken yet another initiative. I had a fruitful meeting with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi during the SAARC Summit at Kathmandu early November. As a result the Secretaries of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Interior and Commerce of the two countries are to meet soon to try to resolve a number of outstanding issues. Besides, we also agreed that the Joint Ministerial Commission would also meet in the first quarter of 1988. Let us hope that these meetings will result in improvement of our relations with India.

Q: Critics of your government's policy on Afghanistan say that by pursuing it Pakistan has incurred vastly more of harm and injury than gain and advantage without being able to influence the march of events. Your comments?

A: Our Afghan policy is one of principle and not of expediency. Pakistan has been pursuing a policy of political settlement of Afghan problem which has not only been endorsed by the Organisation of Islamic Conference but has been continuously (for the past eight years) supported by the majority of the international community. The recent voting in the United Nations General Assembly where 123 countries voted in favour of our resolution on Afghanistan was yet another proof of Pakistan's correct policy on the Afghan issue.

Q: There has been a declining trend in the contribution your citizens working in the Gulf have been making to their country's economy. How do you propose to make up for this loss, and, how are the Pakistanis returning home faring?

A: We are aware of the fact that remittances have declined in recent years and they are expected to continue to do so but at a slower rate as the employment position in the Gulf countries stabilises. To compensate for this loss of foreign exchange we put in place a new Trade Policy. This policy, which will be in effect for the next three years is aimed at stimulating our exports through improved competitiveness particularly of high value added manufactures. The response to the initiatives taken in the Trade Policy have been very favourable. In the first four months of this year our exports are up by 16 per cent in dollar terms and we estimate that for the full year our exports will be close to $4.2 billion compared to $3.5 billion last year. This would constitute an increase of 20 per cent. It is hoped that this trend will be maintained in the future years. The government will continue to take necessary steps to ensure this objective.

In regard to the workers who have returned from the Middle East, our assessment is that a large number of them have entered transportation and service sectors. Some of these workers have also set up small industries which is a particularly welcome development.

Q: Many people feel that the sudden rise of sectarianism in Pakistan is due to restraints on party politics which obliges political aspirants to fall back upon pseudo-religious and pseudo-ethnic identifications for their candidacy and concept of public service. How would you comment on that?

A: There are no restraints on party politics in Pakistan. All political parties are enjoying full freedom and all Pakistanis are at liberty to join and work for parties of their choice. The contention is therefore not based on the reality of the situation as it exists in Pakistan today.

PDRY

Minister on Oil Discoveries, Ties With Kuwait

JN071008 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic
3 Dec 87 p 7

[By 'Adnan al-Rashid]

[Excerpts] Aden—The energy and minerals sector in fraternal PDRY occupies a special and vital place. This is especially true when it is considered that investments in the electricity sector during the 2d 5-Year Plan for 1981-85 exceeded $400 million. Investments in the oil and minerals sector also approached this figure.

The Ministry of Energy and Minerals has concluded agreements with several friendly states and specialized companies. It is hoped that these will produce positive results over the next few days. The stages covered by these agreements differ from one to another. Some are still in the survey stage, some are in the drilling stage, and others are in the stage of discoveries receiving a final evaluation.

Oil discoveries are a subject of greater concern to the political leadership than to economists in the PDRY. Great hopes are attached to these discoveries. This is in view of their impact on the national economy of the PDRY, which has experienced poor economic conditions since it achieved independence in 1967.

To learn more on the subject of these discoveries, AL-ANBA' conducted an interview with Salih Abu Bakr bin Husaynun, deputy prime minister and minister of energy and minerals. He discussed the latest developments connected with these discoveries, cooperation with Kuwait, and the expertise being utilized in this field. The following is the text of this interview:

[Al-Rashid] In an earlier interview with AL-ANBA', you announced that there have been positive oil discoveries in your country. What is the latest on this subject?

[Bin Husaynun] You must have heard the report of 15 April in which we announced that oil was discovered in several oil fields in Shabwah, through the cooperation of the USSR Ministry of Geology. At that time, we announced that good-quality oil had been found in commercially viable quantities and that the deposits in the first three oil fields are estimated at 500 million tons. Work will begin in early 1988 to build the oil installations in this area. A 220-km pipeline will be built from the oil fields to the port of Balhaf on the Arabian Sea. Completing this project will require 12-15 months. [passage omitted]

[Al-Rashid] How do Kuwait and the PDRY cooperate in the oil sector?

[Bin Husaynun] Cooperation between Kuwait and the PDRY is wide and varied. It reflects the excellent relations between the two fraternal governments and peoples. I will confine my discussion to our cooperation in the oil sector. The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation is refining its oil at the Aden refinery at rate of 30,000 barrels a day. This is done under two contracts: one governmental and the other commercial. We also have a joint company that specializes in refueling ships at Aden port. This company has offered this service over the last 10 years.

The Kuwaiti Foreign Enterprise Company recently began as a partner for oil prospecting in the eastern Shabwah region; in other words, the Hadhramawt Governorate. The Kuwaiti private sector is also participating in oil exploration in the Republic. An independent group is additionally prospecting for oil in the Balhaf region, in Shabwah Governorate. This is the first time that an Arab private sector enterprise has directly engaged in prospecting operations in the Republic. [passage omitted]

[Al-Rashid] Is Yemen only utilizing the expertise of the East Bloc in these oil discoveries, or are you also planning to benefit from Western capitalist knowledge?

[Bin Husaynun] By reviewing the companies and corporations engaged in oil prospecting in the Republic, you can discern the policy we are pursuing to locate and exploit oil resources. We accept assistance from and cooperate with everyone, in accordance with a firmly established policy. While we are cooperating with the USSR in the Shabwah region, eight Western and Arab companies are also engaged in prospecting operations elsewhere. Many other concerns have additionally expressed interest in prospecting in other open areas, and we are studying their applications. There are still vast regions suitable for prospecting. We are willing to cooperate with everyone, in accordance with certain clear and specific principles. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Jordan's King Husayn Meets With King Fahd

LD072150 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2128 GMT
7 Dec 87

[Text] Riyadh, 7 Dec (SPA)—This evening, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy

mosques, met with his brother, His Majesty King Husayn ibn Talal, monarch of the sisterly Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, at Al-Yamamah Palace.

Representatives of the Kingdom attending the meeting included His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard; and His Royal Highness Prince Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and civil aviation, and inspector general.

His Excellency Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i and Staff Marshal al-Sharif Zayd ibn Shakir attended for the Jordanian side.

Concludes Visit, Departs

LD081710 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1540 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Excerpt] Al-Madinah, 8 Dec (SPA)—His Majesty King Husayn of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan departed Al-Madinah at 1730 today following a 2-day official visit to the Kingdom. [passage omitted]

Yemen Arab Republic

Libyan Inspector General Al-Kharrubi Arrives

JN041836 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 Dec 87

[Text] Brother Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the Libyan Revolution Command Council and inspector general of the Libyan Armed Forces, arrived in Sanaa today on a visit scheduled to last for several days. During his stay, he will hold talks with a number of officials. On hand to welcome him were Brothers Major 'Abdallah Husayn al-Bashir, chief of staff and member of the Standing Committee; Major Sa'id Muhammad Ghanim, deputy chief of staff for training; a protocol official from the presidency; and 'Ali Salih Mansur, the Libyan charge d'affairs in Sanaa.

Received by President

JN051402 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 5 Dec 87

[Text] Brother Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, received Brother Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the 1 September Revolution Command Council and inspector general of the Libyan Armed Forces, at his office in the Presidential Palace in Al-Hudaydah at noon today. They discussed a number of issues of interest to the two fraternal countries, as well as the distinguished militant relations between the Yemeni and the Libyan revolutions. The brother president gave Brother al-Kharrubi a message for his brother, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan 1 September Revolution.

The meeting was attended by Brother Lieutenant Colonel Mujahid Abu Shawarib, deputy prime minister for domestic affairs and member of the Standing Committee; Lieutenant Colonel 'Abdallah al-Bashiri, chief of staff and member of the Standing Committee; Brother 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad 'Ali 'Uthman, governor of Al-Hudaydah Governorate and member of the Standing Committee; and 'Ali Salih Mansur, official heading the Libyan Brotherhood Bureau in Sanaa.

Departs 5 Dec

JN051915 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Dec 87

[Text] Brother Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the Revolution Command Council of the 1 September Revolution and inspector general of the Armed Forces in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, left Al-Hudaydah airport this afternoon after concluding his visit. While in our country, he met with the brother leader president and secretary general, Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

He was seen off by Brother Lieutenant Colonel 'Abdallah al-Bashiri, chief of staff and member of the Standing Committee; and Brother 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad 'Ali 'Uthman, governor of Al-Hudaydah Governorate and member of the Standing Committee.

'Aziz Meets UN's Perez de Cuellar in New York

JN082023 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 2000 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar at the United Nations today. 'Aziz described his talks with the UN secretary general as constructive and cordial. He said he renewed Iraq's absolute acceptance of Security Council Resolution 598, calling for an end to the Iraq-Iran war and for implementing it as an indivisible whole according to its sequence.

Ambassador Views U.S. Stance on Gulf War

PM081549 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Dec 87 p 3

[Muhammad Sadiq report on interview with 'Abd al-Amir al-Anbari, ambassador to the United States, in Washington; date not given]

[Text] Washington, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—Iraqi Ambassador in Washington 'Abd al-Amir al-Anbari has described Iraqi-U.S. relations as good and expects them to improve quickly on all levels in the future. He said that Iraq's position toward any state is determined according to the stand adopted by that state on the aggressive war Iran is waging against Iraq. In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Ambassador al-Anbari, whose mission in London ended only a few weeks ago, assessed and viewed current Iraqi-U.S. relations at the beginning of his mission in Washington:

My arrival in the United States comes at a time when Iraqi-U.S. relations are generally good and cordial, represented, according to the statements made by the U.S. Administration and official spokesmen, by a neutral policy toward the war. Stressing this point means that the United States has agreed not to supply Iran with any arms, contrary to its earlier policy, under which it or some of its organs supplied Iran with weapons both directly and indirectly.

He added: But now, and according to statements by the administration, the situation is different. Above all, this neutrality does not conflict with its serious and eager position regarding the implementation of Security Council resolutions on this war, especially Resolution 598 which was adopted unanimously by both permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council as binding on all parties.

Ambassador al-Anbari added: On this basis we find that there have been many positive aspects in U.S. policy, especially in the diplomatic field, which seek to bring the Gulf war to a peaceful end in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. Therefore, Iraq's policy is in line with such a position, because this is what we have always demanded.

He said: This war must end according to the principles contained in the UN Charter and the rules of international law relating to the conflict. He also noted: In this regard, there is an important point I must explain. Since the neutrality of any state toward the Iraq-Iran war does not necessarily mean that such neutrality should continue when a resolution is adopted by the Security Council compelling the two parties to the conflict to adhere to the principles contained in the Security Council's resolution, as a jurist I would say here: All UN member states are obliged to adopt a position against the country rejecting the Security Council resolution, since the Council is the supreme international authority responsible for establishing security and peace in the world.

According to the Charter of the United Nations, in which most states of the world are members committed to its principles, when this Council issues a binding resolution, and not just a recommendation, the states involved in the conflict must be committed to it just as Iraq was when it expressed readiness to welcome the resolution if the Iranian side also displayed readiness to implement it correctly, with good intention and without deception.

Therefore, states must not adopt a neutral stand with regard to its implementation since the Security Council's resolution is binding on all international community members. I believe that even the states which are not members of the United Nations are also obliged under the UN Charter to adopt an opposing and not a neutral stand against the state which refuses to adhere to such a resolution.

Regarding Iraqi-U.S. relations in general and not on the basis of the U.S. position on the war that Iran is waging against Iraq, Ambassador al-Anbari said: I must reiterate that as far as Iraq is concerned now, the position adopted by any state toward this war—which Iran is waging against Iraq and which is aimed at not only the entity of the Iraqi state but the existence of the Iraqi people as a people—will be the principal criterion that will determine Iraq's position toward that state. This also applies to trade companies and other establishments. On this basis our position will be determined.

Iraqi-U.S. relations in general were severed diplomatically and economically for a long time. Iraq cut them in the wake of the Israeli attack on the Arab states in 1967, and they were resumed just a few years ago. This had an impact on economic, cultural, technological, and political ties between the two countries. After relations were resumed at the ambassadorial level, some aspects of bilateral relations began to improve in the cultural domain and to some extent in the trade field, especially with regard to some agricultural products which the United States exports to international markets.

About the future of these relations, Ambassador al-Anbari said: As long as the U.S. position is in favor of ending this war, we expect relations between the two countries to develop rapidly, especially, as I have said, in the fields of cultural and technological cooperation and perhaps in the trade and economic domains. We in Iraq are preparing ourselves to confront a challenge which is no less dangerous than that which the war imposed on Iraq, government and people. By this I mean the postwar challenge, since we are preparing ourselves for the postwar stage, which requires the reconstruction of installations that have been destroyed; namely, economic installations, as well as those relating to daily life in various areas such as schools, hospitals, roads, and so on.

In this regard, there is expanded scope for economic cooperation with the private sector at the level of government establishments on the grounds that the United States is a major industrialized country. In the past it did not play a role in this regard, but after the war the door will be open to U.S. establishments according to the principles of mutual international competition and international bids with the other industrialized states, whether Western or Eastern, Asian or European. This is to participate both in making rapid and major strides toward economic development and in the reconstruction of the Iraqi economy. We are preparing ourselves for such a stage while appreciating the danger from the Iranian side and its readiness to launch military operations at any time.

As to whether the Irangate scandal still has an adverse impact on Iraqi-U.S relations, he said: We in the world of politics cannot indulge ourselves in determining intentions and hidden motives. However, what is being declared by a state must be taken into account. This is what the United States announced. It said that what happened in the secret arms sale scandal was a deviation from sound attitudes. The United States, at both the official and popular levels, has probably realized the danger of slipping into dealings with Iran the Iranian way by operating behind the scenes—the way the Iranian side prefers. We take U.S. statements to represent the reality of U.S. policy. The element that causes us to lean toward giving credence to this position is that it is in line with the interests of the United States itself, on the grounds that it is a major country whose concern is for peace and stability to prevail in the world in general.

Therefore, we expect the declared U.S. position to be genuine and we consider it on this basis. We prefer to consider that Irangate was a lesson for them, that the incident belongs to the past, and that the present and future indicate there will be greater cooperation.

About the criticism raised against him when he participated in a conference held by former President Jimmy Carter last month in Atlanta, Georgia, and which the Israelis also attended, to discuss the Middle East issues, Ambassador al-Anbari said: I am pleased with this question. Some yellow papers tried to distort this subject. What happened was that former President Jimmy Carter has an institute for international relations at Atlanta University and called for conducting a kind of dialogue on two important international issues. The first concerns an international conference on the Palestinian problem. 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah from Jordan, Syrian UN Ambassador Adib al-Dawudi, and a number of U.S. experts participated in this part of the conference and discussed the issue. I personally did not attend this part of the meeting. According to my information, the Israeli ambassador in Washington attended this part of the meeting without the participation of Arab experts or representatives.

But there was another seminar which was completely separate and had no connection whatsoever with this first part. It related to the Iranian aggression against Iraq. This seminar was attended by President Carter, a number of experts, and (Sharon Hunter), an Iranian who worked at the Iranian Foreign Ministry during the shah's era but is now an American actually representing the Iranian position, since she said at the seminar that it is the Arabs who have ambitions and not the reverse!

Nizar Hamdun, under secretary at the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, and I also attended the seminar, where we were able to explain Iraq's viewpoint and its right to defend itself. We pointed out the peaceful means required to put an immediate end to this war, which is destructive not only to Iraq but to the Iranian people as well.

This was all that happened. The important thing worth mentioning—the point that confirms what Iraq said and still says on many occasions—is that as a result of its insistence on continuing its aggressive acts, Iran, as confirmed by many U.S. experts at the seminar, has lost its capability of launching a major offensive to infiltrate Iraqi defenses. They stressed that Iran is unable to face the idea of peace openly and clearly and that it will continue in its aggressive acts until the circumstances are suitable for it to turn to peace. I would like to stress that the seminar was not held for the purpose of issuing resolutions or recommendations. It was merely a group of experts meeting to present both the Iraqi and Iranian positions; it had no link with the so-called peace conference.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Operations

'Large Maritime Target' Hit

JN081428 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1416 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Statement by a military spokesman issued on 8 December]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our heroic Air Force will remain the raging force in the face of our renegade enemies. It will continue to embody the will of our great people to cut off the

economic lifelines of the criminal Iranian regime and its oil supplies used in its aggression against our country. At 1340 [1040 GMT] today, our aircraft dealt an accurate and effective blow to a very large maritime target near the Iranian coast. Our aircraft then returned safely to the homeland, praise be to God.

[Dated] 8 December 1987

Iranian Tanker Attacked

JN081820 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1754 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] London, 8 Dec (INA)—The British insurance company Lloyds this evening announced that the Iranian oil tanker "Alamot" [name as received] was hit by a missile fired by Iraqi fighters when they raided a maritime target near the Iranian coast this afternoon. An Iraqi military communique announced that Iraqi Air Force planes raided a very large maritime target near the Iranian coast at 1340 [1040 GMT] today, dealing an accurate and direct blow. They then returned safely to base. [passage indistinct]

Spokesman on Iranian Losses

JN081441 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1425 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Baghdad, 8 Dec (INA)—Iraqi warplanes have raided a large maritime target near the Iranian coast, dealt it an effective blow, and returned safely to base. In a statement to INA today, a military spokesman said the Iraqi forces destroyed one Iranian tank and four machinegun emplacements in their activities in the operational areas. The Iraqi spokesman added that two enemy infantry positions, five observation posts, one vehicle, one Poclain excavator, and three ammunition dumps were destroyed and a number of Iranian soldiers were killed through the Iraqi forces' activities in various sectors.

Communique No 2,943

JN081716 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Communique No 2,943 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 8 December]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Last night and today, our valiant Armed Forces continued their heroic activities, inflicting on the Zionist Khomeyniites new losses as follows:

1. Our heroic Air Force will remain the raging force in the face of the renegade enemies. It will continue to embody the will of our great people to cut off the economic lifelines of the criminal Iranian regime and its oil supplies used in its aggression against our country. At 1340 [1040 GMT] today, our aircraft dealt an accurate and effective blow to a very large maritime target near the Iranian coast. Our aircraft then returned safely to the homeland, praise be to God.

2. In the Special I Army corps sector—the Allahu Akbar Forces—one enemy machinegun emplacement was destroyed and its crew killed.

3. In the II Army Corps central sector, three enemy observation posts, two light machinegun emplacements, and one infantry position were destroyed.

4. In the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah, one vehicle, one machinegun emplacement, and one Poclain excavator were set on fire and destroyed.

5. In the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan, two observation posts were destroyed and their occupants killed.

6. In the VI Army corps sector east of Tigris, two ammunition dumps were destroyed.

7. In the VII Army Corps sector, one tank and one infantry position were destroyed and two ammunition dumps were blown up.

8. Three enemy gunboats attempted to approach Al-'Amiq Port. The brave port force confronted the enemy gunboats with its weapons, forcing them to flee toward the Iranian coast.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 8 December 1987

Fatah Kidnaps, Releases Druze in Athens

TA071007 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
7 Dec 87 p 1, 7

[Text] Fatah members in Greece kidnapped an Israeli Druze who was visiting Athens, releasing him following interrogation under torture. The man then went to the Israeli representation in Athens and complained about the incident. A complaint was filed with the Greek authorities.

The incident occurred on 18 November, but was not previously reported.

It transpires that during the man's stay in Athens, unidentified Palestinians tried to make contact with him. It later became clear that they were Fatah members.

During one of their meetings, the Palestinians forced the man to accompany them. He was apparently led to an office belonging to the PLO organization in Greece. His interrogators claimed that he was a Jew posing as a Druze.

He was beaten and tortured during his interrogation. After being detained for 24 hours, the man was released with the threat not to dare complain to the police. The Druze reached the Israeli representation in Athens and reported the kidnapping and torture.

Sources in Athens do not doubt that the man was indeed held by members of a terrorist organization, but according to them there were no signs of torture on his body except for some scratches.

It has been learned that Israeli elements initially doubted the man's story about the kidnapping and torture. However, the authorities in Israel who checked the story found it to be true.

Well-informed sources in Athens and Jerusalem emphasize that a distinction must be drawn between the permission granted by the Greeks to operate a PLO office on Greek territory—a thing which must be regarded gravely—and the aid they gave the young Druze after he turned to them.

These sources say that the Greeks did not spare any effort to help the youth after he had escaped from his captors, and even gave him money and clothes. Approximately 24 hours later, they contacted the Israeli representation in Athens, turning the youth over to it.

Late last night there was still no reaction in Athens to the protest lodged by Foreign Minister Peres with his Greek counterpart Papoulias on the matter. Sources in both capitals expressed hope that this incident will not hamper attempts to improve bilateral relations.

Sources in Athens said yesterday: "If somebody is to be blamed in this instance, the primary blame lies with the terrorist organization for using the auspices of another country to kidnap and torture civilians."

Israeli ambassador to Greece Moshe Gilbo'a yesterday refused to comment on the affair of the young Druze, including the way the Israeli representation handled the affair.

Peres Protests to Athens

TA081208 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
8 Dec 87 p A5

[Text] "A thorough investigation should be made into the circumstances in which contact was made between a Druze youth from the Golan Heights village of Mas'adah and PLO representatives in Athens." This was asserted by Greek and Israeli elements yesterday in reaction to the story of an Israeli Druze who claims to have been tortured by terrorists in Athens.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres raised this issue in his talks with his Greek counterpart Karolos Papoulias, expressing Israel's great concern over this matter. The Greek minister promised to investigate the affair.

The Druze in question served in the IDF and lives in one of the Galilee [as published] villages. He said that during a visit to Athens last month he met Palestinians who forced him to accompany them to a house where they interrogated and tortured him. He claims that the PLO people accused him of being an Israeli intelligence agent.

The man managed to escape from his captors and hurried to report the incident to the Israeli representation in Athens.

Soviet Spokesman Interviewed on Bilateral Ties

TA082018 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
8 Dec p A4

[Report on interview with Boris Pyadyshev, deputy spokesman for the USSR Foreign Ministry, by Washington correspondent 'Ofra Yeshu'a-Lyth in Washington on 7 December]

[Text] The way things stand at present, the Soviet Union is not prepared to resume diplomatic relations with Israel in return for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East; it is not prepared to guarantee that such a conference will be a forum for holding direct talks between the sides involved in the conflict without the intervention of the superpowers; and it regards the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinians, which must participate in such a conference.

These remarks were made yesterday to MA'ARIV by Boris Dmitriyevich Pyadyshev, deputy spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry, who also serves as "number two" to the spokesman for the Soviet delegation in Washington for the summit talks.

Pyadyshev made clear that even following the convening of the international conference his country will not commit itself to an "immediate" renewal in relations, but that "initial steps" must first be taken. Nevertheless, the spokesman reiterated the Soviet position that his country is interested in principle in resuming diplomatic relations with Israel. "In our view, a situation in which there are no diplomatic relations between countries in general is not a natural situation, but...first the problems that brought the existing situation about, which arose following the war in 1967, must be resolved."

Pyadyshev asserted: "We recognize Israel's right to exist and its sovereignty over its territory." On the question of how the Soviet Union wants to participate in the peace process when it does not maintain normal communication with one of the parties to the conflict, he replied: "It is incorrect that there is no communication between us. We hold regular meetings between foreign ministers at the UN General Assembly, and there are contacts in other ways, including the consular delegation that visited Israel."

Yeshu'a-Lyth: Why does the official Soviet delegation to the summit talks include a representative of a body called the Anti-Zionist Committee? How should Israel respond to the existence of such an institution that opposes its very existence?

Pyadyshev: No, the Anti-Zionist Committee (headed by Samuil Zivs, the "official Jew" of all Soviet delegations abroad) is not anti-Zionist at all. This is a committee that opposes only the extremist tendencies within the Zionist movement.

Yeshu'a-Lyth: But Zionism is the central idea on which the State of Israel was founded. To us it seems that being anti-Zionist means being anti-Israeli.

Pyadyshev: "Perhaps the name is really not a good choice...in fact, why don't you suggest another name to me; perhaps it really should be changed," Pyadyshev said with a slight smile. The issue undoubtedly was not new to him and he had a ready answer. "What would you suggest?"

Yeshu'a-Lyth: You have already defined it yourself. If you had a "Committee Against Extremist Tendencies in Zionism" that would not have disturbed me so much. But why do you have a committee that deals with someone else's ideology in the first place?

Pyadyshev: Well, we have lots of committees, for all sorts of things. But the name can certainly be changed. Perhaps the time to do this has come.

Yeshu'a-Lyth: Why then are you not prepared to resume relations? Is it correct to use diplomatic relations as a "punishment," as a continuation of things that happened 20 years ago?

Pyadyshev: What happened 20 years ago is history. We are dealing with the present now, and at present there is a need for an overall settlement in the Middle East. The best way to achieve such a settlement is through an international conference. I support the resumption of relations, but not as a prior condition to a conference. Let us first start to talk, and then we will see which steps can be taken. Relations might not be renewed immediately. Initial steps must first be taken, perhaps half a step. We will then begin to talk.

He was clear cut on the subject of the PLO, which he said must be a partner in the negotiations: "The PLO is the only organization enjoying some authority in the Palestinian movement."

Yeshu'a-Lyth: Is it not possible that other Palestinians who do not want to be identified with the organization will come forward, such as King Husayn's supporters?

Pyadyshev: We are interested in maintaining the unity of the Palestinian movement as expressed in the Palestinian conference in Algiers, where solidarity with the PLO was demonstrated. This proves the strength of that organization.

Pyadyshev said he "could understand" the complaints of former prisoners of Zion, such as Anatoliy Shcharanskiy. "We have a problem with emigration, but this problem could have been solved. We are trying to build a natural mechanism that will permit emigration. We should not imprison in our country people who do not want to be with us."

Nevertheless, he added: "Sometimes I think that perhaps there are people who would like to use this issue to apply psychological pressure on the Soviet Union. The pressure does not help; rather, it disrupts our attempts to solve our problems in a natural, normal process, in the style of 'perestroyka.'"

In private talks with journalists and Soviet officials, they are not at all afraid to say that the fact that relations with Israel have been severed is "sad," "a mistake made in the past."

The spokesmen from Moscow are prepared to talk openly about one crucial "mistake" by the regime: "We have already taken a political decision to recall our forces from Afghanistan," spokesman Gennadiy Gerasimov said at an unprecedented joint news conference yesterday with President Reagan's spokesman, "but no decision has been made as of yet as to when and how to implement this decision."

Replacements Due For Soviet Delegation Members
TA081229 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
8 Dec 87 p A2

[Report by Refa'el Mann]

[Text] Most of the members of the Soviet consular delegation currently in Israel are being replaced. Most of the delegation members, aside from delegation head Genrykh Plikhin, will leave Israel, to be replaced by other Soviet Government officials. The Soviets asked for and received visas for the new team.

Yevgeniy Antipov, who headed the delegation when its members arrived here last July, has not been in Israel for the past few months and is apparently in Moscow. The delegation members' visas, which were already extended in October, will expire in January. Despite their prolonged stay in Israel, the delegation members continue to reside at the Tel Aviv Hilton Hotel.

Peres, Shamir Comment on U.S.-USSR Summit
TA081947 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic
6 Dec 87 p 1

[Editorial: "The U.S.-Soviet Summit—A Strategic Opportunity for All Nations"]

[Text] As is his wont, Israeli Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres occasionally parts ways with Yitzhaq Shamir, his prime minister, only to meet later on at the same point at which they had differed.

For Shim'on Peres the U.S.-Soviet summit, in this context and on the eve of its convocation in Washington, has become a mere "lost opportunity" that will achieve nothing with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is due to one reason, according to Peres' logic: because Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has emerged as a champion in the United States. In the view of the Jews at least, this means that he does not have to make concessions on many subjects to gain a good reputation among the Americans.

In the same context, Peres thus sees eye to eye with Shamir who has insisted and continues to insist that the "Middle East crisis" is not on the agenda of the two superpowers' summit, despite the fact that Reagan and Gorbachev have affirmed more than once that the agenda does include this crisis, or more specifically the Palestinian problem.

If by his remarks Peres wants to focus attention on the upcoming U.S.-Soviet summit in May or June 1988, he is proceeding on the same path as that of his prime minister in downplaying the importance of the current summit and concentrating his efforts in confronting any decisions that might emerge that do not conform with Israel's programs and plans.

That is how the Israeli Government, including both the Alignment and the Likud, is placing preconditions before the United States since it is not able to employ this tactic with the Soviet Union. When Israel insists on downplaying the significance of the summit, it is in fact trying to pressure the U.S. Administration not to accede, for example, to any possible agreement with the Soviet Union in promoting the international conference on peace in the Middle East.

The ultimate indication of this Israeli "downplaying" of the Washington summit is the Israeli Government's continued opposition to the international conference and its consistent foiling of any international effort in this connection. The aim is to achieve the "ideas" that this government proposes, which basically perpetuate the occupation under various slogans and names despite all that is said on the disagreement between Shamir and Peres over this slogan or that name.

The outcome of the summit though is not subject to Israeli downplaying or overplaying. International resolve will ultimately impose itself for the sake of world peace, one of whose prominent motives is the establishment of a comprehensive and just peace in this region. All this makes the U.S.-Soviet summit a strategic opportunity for all nations.

Shamir Objects to Stingers to Bahrain
TA091523 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1300 GMT Dec 87

[Text] Israel objects to the supply of U.S.-made Stinger missiles to Bahrain. The prime minister relayed Israel's objection to U.S. Under Secretary of State Edward Derwinski. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that Mr Shamir made it understood that Israel fears the missiles would find their way from Bahrain to irresponsible elements in Lebanon for use against the IDF.

Air Force Commander Issues Warning to Syria
TA091050 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
9 Dec 87 pp 1, 4

[Report by military correspondent Re'uven Pedatzur]

[Text] "Since the Syrians are talking about strategic parity with Israel in the sphere of surface-to-surface missiles, I would suggest that they recall the events following their launching of such a missile at Migdal Ha'emeq. They would be well advised to bear in mind that if they dare use such weapons in the next war, they can count on Israel striking a blow ten times harsher than the attack on the Damascus Army headquarters" in October 1973. This was stated by Air Force Commander Major General Avihu Bin-Nun in an interview with the Air Force magazine.

Gen Bin-Nun disclosed that the Air Force is about to purchase new assault helicopters. The Air Force is also contemplating the procurement of F-15 and F-16 combat aircraft. At some stage the possibility of purchasing F-18's was also considered, and the option may still prove topical in the future. Gen Bin-Nun said that the Air Force has no intention of deliberating for long because it hopes to obtain the new aircraft by 1990 or 1991.

Referring to the ground forces, Gen Bin-Nun said that "perhaps we should have reached the conclusion that something should be done about the ground forces, or maybe we should have arrived at a more specific definition of the internal balance within the various ground forces a long time ago. What we have to consider now are ways to invest primarily in aerial supremacy, because that would help to win the battle on the ground, too.

"Those who think that the Air Force's role can be minimized, or its forces slashed, in favor of expanding the ground forces in hopes of deciding the battle on land are making a fundamental mistake."

Norwegian Defense Minister Arrives on Visit

TA081904 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Norway's Defense Minister Johan Jorgen Holst arrived in Israel tonight for a 3-day visit. Minister Holst said he will not press the Israeli Government on the issue of the heavy water which it received from Norway in 1959. Holst said he was satisfied with the agreement to have a team of experts explore the issue. More from reporter Sabra Chartrand.

[Begin recording] [Chartrand] On his first official visit to Israel Norwegian Defense Minister Holst said he is satisfied that Israel and Norway will continue to cooperate to resolve the heavy water argument for meeting the requirements of both countries on the issue. Norway has requested to inspect the heavy water which, it fears, Israel may have used to produce nuclear weapons.

[Holst] You know, I think that the issue of the heavy water is an issue which is handled between our two governments in an agreed fashion. I think when I had a conversation with your minister of energy that we managed to agree on a procedure, and I was informed also today that the Israeli Government has followed up, and that there will be an Israeli group coming to Oslo next week, to discuss it at the level of experts, and I think that's the way in which we ought to proceed now.

[Chartrand] Holst said his visit will focus on bilateral relations and the possibility that Norway will purchase weapons from Israel. Norway and Israel share the condition of being small countries exposed strategically and militarily, Holst said, and we might benefit from the way Israel solves its problems of confrontation. Sabra Chartrand, Ben-Gurion Airport. [end recording]

Peres Plan To Demilitarize Gaza Detailed

TA090958 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 9 Dec 87 p 4

[Report by Ilan Kfir]

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' Gaza plan is part of the overall political settlement with Jordan. This plan, which has not yet been fully finalized, is based on elements from the Camp David framework agreement. Peres has held both open and secret meetings on the matter with the U.S. Administration, Egyptian President Mubarak, King Husayn, and local Gaza Strip and West Bank leaders.

The main points of the plan are:

The Gaza Strip will constitute part of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

The West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be linked and will form one stretch of land.

A separate and independent self-rule mechanism will be established in the Gaza Strip to handle municipal affairs and other civilian matters. It will be responsible for the areas of education, health, social welfare, etc. A local police force will be in charge of order and will deal with transportation matters.

The IDF and the security forces will retain control over defense and internal defense affairs.

The IDF commands will be relocated outside the heart of the Gaza Strip.

Israel will limit daily contact with the Gaza Strip to a minimum.

The settlements located at the center of the Gaza Strip—a source of friction and tension—will be relocated in another agricultural area.

The possibility of deploying a multinational force in the Gaza Strip along the lines of the MFO stationed in the demilitarized area of the Sinai will be examined. Any such arrangement will require international guarantees.

Israel will take action to improve the quality of life, alleviate population density problems, and secure independent job opportunities for the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip within the framework of regional development projects. The foreign minister's so-called Marshall plan aims, among other things, at raising funds from all over the world for a joint Israeli-Arab welfare project.

The inhabitants of the territories will continue to have free access into Israel for the purpose of their work.

Levi Criticizes Plan

TA082043 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister and Construction and Housing Minister David Levi said today that Shim'on Peres' comments on demilitarizing the Gaza Strip are tantamount to a concession as well as lacking in political wisdom. Speaking at the inauguration of a section of road at the Yagur intersection, David Levi said that prattle should be stemmed and that one should be reticent in giving declarations that may condemn [as heard] terror and discourage the settlers.

Editorials View Plan

TA090927 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 9 Dec 87

[From the review of morning press editorials]

[Text] HA'ARETZ says that although the operational aspect of Mr Peres' remarks on the Gaza issue is not clear, he did put his finger on the demographic problem, which is the most painful and worrisome problem of the country. Mr Peres spoke to the point, but his people are afraid of their own shadows. They have not yet decided what tactics to use in the election campaign. Meanwhile, scared off by the reactions of the nationalistic populists, they have retreated slightly. Never has an issue so crucial to the future of the nation and its struggle for its existence as a Jewish state been treated in such a lackadaisical, hesitant, and apologetic way as this, says HA'ARETZ.

HATZOFE writes that it is a pity that Mr Peres is leading a struggle against Jewish settlers and questioning the right of the Jewish people to settle in Eretz Yisra'el. He should, instead, deal with the real problems on the agenda which contain the minefields that endanger peace. The momentum for Jewish settlement must continue, the settlers in the Gaza Strip must be encouraged to continue their blessed campaign, and even to expand to fortify the safety and wellbeing of the State of Israel.

THE JERUSALEM POST writes that within Herut itself there are men of practical sense who realize that the Gaza Strip is an awesome burden rather than an asset for Israel. But they dare not speak their minds in public, for fear of being disowned by their party. They probably welcome Mr Peres speaking out on the subject as he did, but must pretend that they do not. Moderately clear-eyed though they are, they allow their blindfolded colleagues to blandly lead the country to a point of no return, adds the newspaper.

HAMODI'A writes that there is no guarantee that the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip under Israeli supervision will satisfy the terrorist organizations, nor does it provide any guarantee that they will perceive demilitarization as a first step toward a return of that region to Arab sovereignty. The terrorist organizations, however, may reach the conclusion that terrorism pays.

Mitzna' Comments on Terror, KAKH Movement

TA081743 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] The IDF is successful in preventing hostile elements from introducing sabotage materials into the territories. As a result, the terrorists are making increased use of homemade bombs. This was stated today by 'Amram Mitzna', commander of the Central Command. Our correspondent Menahem Horowitz reports.

[Begin recording] [Horowitz] The bomb that exploded near the car of Knesset Member Rabbi Waldman was not necessarily intended to hit this particular car, 'Amram Mitzna' says, adding that instructions in the terrorists' possession on how to prepare such bombs were seized.

[Mitzna'] Most of the terrorist activity perpetrated in Judaea and Samaria and inside the territory is carried out using homemade or improvised sabotage materials or explosives. One reason for this is that the border is closed, and there is no possibility of smuggling sabotage materials. The terrorists therefore improvise; they improvise Molotov cocktails and roadside bombs, among other things, such as the one that exploded Saturday night next to Rabbi Waldman's car.

[Horowitz] The commander of the Central Command calls on [Jewish] public leaders in Judaea and Samaria to come out against the activity of KAKH Movement members. Mitzna' defines that movement as a small, radical, and loud body that has reached new heights.

[Mitzna'] This is a good opportunity for the leaders of settlers in Qiryat Arba' in particular and perhaps for the leaders of settlers in Judaea and Samaria in general, to notice, perhaps more clearly this time, the danger inherent in giving support or encouragement that is manifested in not coming out against radical bodies that are trying to present their views. These bodies in fact are trying to monopolize the right to act against the local residents as well as against the army and the security forces, of course. [end recording]

DFLP 'Terrorist' Squad Caught in Qalqilyah

TA091121 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] The Army spokesman says a terrorist gang responsible for the killing of 'Ofra Moses in a Molotov cocktail attack near Alfe Menashe has been apprehended. The gang threw Molotov cocktails at a number of civilian vehicles in the Qalqilyah area. One of its members is suspected of throwing the bomb at the Moses family's

car on 11 April this year. As a result, two members of the family died from burns and four were injured. The same man is suspected of the Molotov cocktail attack on the Regev family's car on 6 August on the Qalqilyah-Alfe Menashe road. The suspect is 25 years old and a resident of Qalqilyah, and is said to be a member of the DFLP led by Nayif Hawatimah. The investigation continues.

Arab Journalist Under Administrative Detention

TA090541 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
0500 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Security forces have placed the head of the Arab journalists union under administrative detention. Security sources said Radwan Abu 'Ayyash was described by authorities as being a senior Fatah activist who received orders and funds to promote the PLO wing in the territories, as well as to create public disturbances. Abu 'Ayyash is the editor of the weekly AL-'AWDAH published in East Jerusalem. He was last seen in public yesterday afternoon.

1 Killed, Several Wounded By IDF in Gaza

TA090854 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0830 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Here is a report from the Gaza Strip: A resident of the Jabalyah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip was killed this morning and several others wounded by IDF shots fired after a Molotov cocktail was hurled at an IDF patrol moving in the camp. None of the soldiers were hurt. The soldiers on the patrol returned fire at the place from where the explosive was hurled, killing a camp resident. Our correspondent 'Ezra Yanuv reports:

An IDF unit was patroling the alleys of the Jabalyah refugee camp this morning as part of its routine activity when, at around 0930, a Molotov cocktail was suddenly thrown. None of the soldiers were hurt by the explosion, and they immediately returned fire at the place from where the charge was hurled, killing a local inhabitant and wounding several others. The soldiers in the patrol dispersed the crowds that had assembled at the site after the incident. The casualties were evacuated to a local hospital.

SLA Forces Repel 'Terrorist' Attack 8 Dec

TA081138 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1100 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] South Lebanese Army [SLA] soldiers repelled a terrorist attack on an SLA post on the border of the security zone. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the terrorists stormed the post while firing LAW [light antitank weapon] missiles, RPG's, and automatic weapons. Soldiers manning the post fired at the terrorists, repelling the attack. Many bloodstains and traces of bodies being dragged indicate that the terrorists suffered casualties. None of the SLA soldiers were wounded.

Attack North of Security Strip

TA081808 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1700 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] SLA tanks and artillery attacked targets north of the security strip for 90 minutes this morning. This was reported to our correspondent Hayim Hecht by the UNIFIL headquarters in Al-Naqurah. Six Shi'ite villages were hit by the shelling. Our correspondent remarks that this was the area from which a terrorist squad that attacked an SLA position this morning took off.

1 Soldier Killed by Mine in Security Strip

TA081618 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1557 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] One IDF soldier was killed and another wounded this morning when an IDF patrol vehicle hit a mine in the central sector of the security strip in southern Lebanon. Our military correspondent Alon Ben-David is in the studio with the first details:

The incident occurred at around 1000 this morning when an IDF patrol moving in the central sector of the security strip near the village of Rshaf, 5 km northwest of Bint Jubayl, hit and activated a mine planted on the shoulder of the road. The explosion killed one soldier and wounded another. The dead soldier's family has been notified.

King Husayn Returns From Saudi Arabia 8 Dec
JN081921 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn returned to the homeland this evening after a 2-day working visit to Saudi Arabia. During the visit, he held a meeting with King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, in Riyadh. [passage omitted]

Finance Minister Presents 1988 Draft Budget
JN081031 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1220 GMT 7 Dec 87

["Text" of budget speech delivered by Finance Minister Dr Hannah 'Awdah to the House of Representatives in Amman on 7 December 1987—recorded]

[Text] Mr Speaker, honorable representatives: It pleases me to present to your esteemed House the draft general budget law for fiscal year 1988 which reflects the government's financial policy for next year and outlines its main economic orientations based on the principles and pillars charted by His Majesty King Husayn for our blessed march.

I am presenting this draft budget at a time when we stand as a unified nation on the threshold of a new Arab phase, the path of which was charted by the Amman summit of reconciliation and accord—the reconciliation of brothers over principles, over the Arab charter, and over the Arab order—and by the accord achieved on unifying stands and positions and also on joint Arab action. At a time when we feel the sublimity and pride aroused by this historic event, which will enable our nation to proceed, with unified ranks, to its destinations, guided by its unified pan-Arab perspective regarding the bright future, God willing, we pray to God the Creator to protect Husayn, the inspired and unique Hashemite Arab leader.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, the thaw achieved at the Amman summit augurs well for the beginning of a new Arab economic beginning much needed in these international circumstances characterized by difficulty and ambiguity. Despite the positive developments in the growth rates of the world economy and international trade registered at the beginning of this year, the events that influenced the main international stock markets gave rise to a new series of negative expectations warning of a new phase of economic recession that will affect both industrialized and developing states.

This situation is not the offspring of present circumstances. It is the result of many accumulations in the international arena—accumulations that have become barriers hindering efforts to overcome international economic crises. These barriers have also impeded efforts to improve economic performance in most world states. No progress worth mentioning has been achieved in ways to develop international relations so that they can adapt to the new phenomena of the age, due to differences in the stands of the deficit states and the surplus states in general and within the industrialized group itself in particular. Hence, these relations continued to proceed along the same lines and in a pattern that does not befit the magnitude of the new challenges facing them.

These difficult situations were bound to have an effect on the economies of Arab states, considering that they are developing states and exposed to a high degree to the world economy. Therefore, growth rates in most of these states retreated, their financial revenues decreased, and the deficit in their budgets increased—factors which made them adopt policies dictated by the new circumstances.

This coincides with regional events in the Arab East that leave negative effects on its development performance and also jeopardize pan-Arab security, international detente, and world peace. These events are represented by the Iranian regime's continued intransigence regarding its rejection of international efforts to end the war and also its insistence on escalating and expanding it to involve the entire Gulf region. They are also represented by the Israeli stand which rejects the international will with regard to bringing about peace in the Middle East and resolving the Palestinian question and also by Israel's persistence in swallowing up Arab territories and expelling residents from their territories. The Lebanese tragedy has remained a bleeding wound in the Arab nation's body.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, amidst this turbulent atmosphere we in Jordan stand in anticipation and with optimism. The anticipation stems from the nature of our national economy which is open to the whole world in general and to the fraternal Arab states in particular. It is also dictated by the need to adapt to the short-term variables and also to the requirements for long-term structural rectification. As for the optimism, it is the epitome of our march that guides our course of action. We derive this optimism from the resolve of this homeland's leader and the patron of its awakening.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, although we are not isolated from international events and the concerns of the region we live in, we have managed to keep the negative effects of these events and concerns to a minimum level, achieve positive growth rates in the national product, and stabilize prices. The deficit in the balance of trade will continue to drop for the 4th consecutive year. We have also managed to maintain the stability of the dinar, foreign currency reserves, and the balance of payments. Furthermore, we have kept the public debt servicing within internationally-recognized safe levels. In the meantime, dealings flourished in the Amman financial market and local deposits increased in banks, thereby enabling the banking system to provide credit facilities for various economic activities.

Although we have achieved all of this, we believe development is not only measured by the level of figures or absolute additions attained in the national economy, but also by the ability to revise methods, policies, and legislation and to strengthen concepts and trends to cope with economic, social, and technological changes.

In the economic field, government decisions and guidelines generally aim at providing the right atmosphere for investment in the Kingdom to push the wheel of development forward. The government has spared no effort in protecting local production and supporting it through all ways and means to help it overcome adverse regional and international economic circumstances. The base of exemptions has been expanded under the Law for the Encouragement of Investment with special emphasis on local export industries and industries that can replace certain imports to strengthen the economy and reduce the deficit in the balance of trade.

In this respect, special consideration was given to maintaining product quality, price stability, and domestic competition. The government is giving priority to its purchases from local production and is trying to introduce modern methods in providing facilities and guarantees for exporters. Moreover, it is giving direct help to these exporters by concluding equal deals and trade agreements with fraternal and friendly states.

The government has also given attention to the contracting and engineering services sector. It has given the companies in this sector priority in the implementation of projects financed by the Treasury and preference in other projects. The government has laid down the bases for the merger of various companies to benefit from the advantages of major projects carried out by organized corporations.

The government is determined to utilize its monetary and financial policies to achieve economic and social development objectives. By constantly developing the means of these policies, the government is encouraging our expatriate sons and Arab and foreign capital to invest in the Kingdom. It is also strengthening the banking system and specialized credit corporations to expand the base of credits for various economic activities.

While it has fulfilled all of its domestic and foreign financial commitments, including the commitments resulting from rectifying the financial conditions of several public shareholding companies, the government has taken certain specific measures to curb expenditures, especially the current ones, while highlighting their great effect on the national economy. Government efforts continue to increase local revenues and to simplify and ease their procurement methods. The reassessed local revenues have reached 549.7 million dinars in 1987 compared to 514.6 million dinars in 1986; in other words, an increase of 6.8 percent. Current expenditures reached 604.5 million dinars in 1987 compared to 571.8 million dinars in 1986; in other words, an increase of 5.7 percent. Thus, local revenues have covered 91 percent of the current expenditures for this year.

The government has taken a number of measures to improve the financial situation of municipal and rural councils and enhance their abilities to provide services for the local community. It also took it upon itself to repay all loans and interest payable by the local councils to the Cities and Villages Development Bank used for the purchase of land for schools and the construction of these schools and also for health centers, other government buildings, and roads until the end of 1986, provided that ministries and government departments will be asked to pay the costs of all similar activities that have been initiated since the beginning of 1987. The government has also rescheduled repayment of other loans and shouldered payment of interest on these loans for 1987. The government has also taken appropriate decisions to organize administration in these councils in general. It has also drawn up development plans for them specifying priorities, organizing procedures, controlling expenditure, and improving revenues.

Evaluating the educational process was necessary as it is related to the labor market and also because this evaluation is able to rectify the structural flaws in this large market. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan intensively shouldered this vital mission. This included all the basics of the educational process, its dimensions, various phases, and all the ins and outs with the aim of focusing on quality and quantity and also on training and qualifications to help adapt the academically, occupationally, and professionally trained labor force to our development requirements.

The evaluation of the educational process coincided with the issuance of government decisions regarding unemployment, which included providing Arab states with Jordanian expertise within the framework of bilateral technical cooperation programs and also with the issuance of the new civil service system which organizes the public service cadres and introduces a new perspective regarding qualifications and employment.

The modernization and development processes in various other domains are proceeding according to what is required for adaptation and rectification. With regard to organizing and modernizing public services, the Royal Commission for Administrative Development continues to reconsider the forms of attachment binding public institutions and other departments. The curative medicine department was separated from the preventive medicine department after your esteemed House had approved the curative medical institution draft law. The committee also plans to merge certain independent departments that perform similar activities into the competent ministries with the aim of upgrading efficiency, controlling expenditures, and improving performance.

The Royal Commission for Administrative Development is completing its modernization of the financial and procurement systems after it standardized the tender regulations contained in the government public works system which was put into effect at the beginning of this year. The government is working to modernize some of the economic and financial laws, especially those governing companies, banks, and public debt and organizing the general budget.

Within the framework of its plan to introduce proper institutional frameworks, the government launched the Higher Council for Science and Technology after your esteemed House approved the pertinent draft law to draw up the priorities for action in this vital sector, organize this action, and formulate the policies seeking to make individuals internalize science and technology and employ them to serve economic and social development and also to serve Jordan's distinguished regional role. The government seeks to make its contributions toward this scientific endeavor reach 0.5 percent of the general budget. The government also initiated an information system to provide decisionmakers with a better flow of updated documented information.

There is no doubt that time is needed to carry out these procedures, policies, and orientations. The most decisive factor in bringing about speedy results lies in the positive response of all, in their cooperation, and also in their appreciation of their importance in bolstering the basic prerequisites which will pave the way for launching the more advanced phases that we strive to enter into.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, the line pursued by Jordan on all levels and in all directions stems from the principles of sovereignty and building its own strength. These principles are founded on several main bases, the most important of which are:

1. Harnassing the available energies to support our valiant Armed Forces, the homeland's impregnable barrier that protects our achievements and gains. Caring for and developing the security and civil defense services to safeguard the security, stability, and assurance we enjoy, praise be to God. On the directives of his majesty the supreme commander, the government is doing all it can to achieve that goal and is seeking to provide our military establishment with all the requirements for technological development so it can continue to carry out its honorable historic misssion.

2. Continued support for our kinfolk in the occupied territory to consolidate their steadfastness on their territory and national soil and to alleviate their suffering under the yoke of occupation. Our emotional commitment and practical response to the worries of our kinfolk in the occupied territory are underscored by the efforts Jordan is making, together with its brothers and friends, in searching for ways to bring about an honorable and just peace achieving complete withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territory and safeguarding the rights of the Palestinian people and are also underscored by the continued measures to confront the arbitrary Israeli actions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and by the development program in the occupied territory. Jordan has initiated that program and made an effective contribution toward it. That program has faced the international community with its responsibilities toward the kinfolk in our occupied territory.

3. Serious perseverance to achieve comprehensive Arab solidarity. On the directives of His Majesty King Husayn , the government continues to expand its contacts with the Arab brothers to strengthen joint Arab action and to achieve Arab economic integration.

4. Maintaining the high-level of credibility and the outstanding prestige Jordan enjoys among countries and international and regional organizations. The government will continue its coordination and dialogue with its friends in the world and will continue to strengthen cooperation with them. The government has been able to obtain the greatest degree possible of priority treatment and favored status and easy conditions for the finance of its development projects and for the transfer of technology. Japan's initiative in extending to Jordan $300 million in credit facilities is an example of the seriousness and effectiveness of Jordan's development policy.

5. Continuing domestic development efforts through methodological planning and the development of means and measures to implement plans and to institute regular follow-up and revision procedures to achieve our development goals.

Honorable representatives, the activation of economic activity and the maintenance of positive growth rates requires the joining of sincere efforts in both the public and private sectors. Public sector measures are represented by the following:

A. Control and rationalization of expenditures in public departments and institutions, increasing their productivity and self-sufficiency, and avoiding duplication of service and work.

B. Increasing domestic public revenues and simplifying the procedures to collect these revenues so they fully cover recurrent expenditures and contribute in increasing proportions toward capital expenditures.

C. The reliance of public institutions on their own resources to fully meet their recurrent and capital expenditures within a specific period of time while seeking to merge departments and institutions with similar and complementary functions.

D. The allocation of the necessary funds to execute the projects included in the 5-year plan within the available means and the allocation of 10 million dinars to contribute to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip development plan.

E. The contribution of 1.2 million dinars for technological and scientific purposes and the allocation of 1.2 million dinars for the technical cooperation program.

F. The continuation of encouraging local products, tourism, and exports and supporting them.

G. The abidance by the funds allocated in the general budget law and not issuing budget annexes unless they are urgently needed.

The government's call for giving the private sector its real role and for enabling it to assume its great responsibilities toward investment and direct production was based on a belief in the importance of this sector. The government's decisions and measures in this regard are aimed at creating an appropriate investment atmosphere in the Kingdom and at encouraging economic institutions to increase all forms of development. The private sector is called upon to exert further efforts to organize its institutions which are represented by all of their activities, to take the initiative to reactivate true investment in the national economy, to promote self-reliance regarding the processes of production and marketing and developing them, and to bolster cooperation with the fraternal and friendly states to be able to play its aspired role in creativity.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, the development projects are the practical translation of economic and social approaches and policies. Allow me to review the most important achievements in the vital and major projects and the government's plans to support and develop these sectors:

I. Agriculture and Irrigation:

The importance of this sector necessitates dealing with it and with the workers in this sector on a modern, scientific basis. The government gives a distinguished priority to it whether regarding the continuation of executing large-scale agricultural projects which cover vast areas and a large class of farmers, such as the Zarqa River Basin and the Al-Hammad Basin development projects, or regarding the support and development of small projects in terms of implementing the agricultural pattern and organizing production, marketing, and the increase in profit which requires a direct subsidization of prices, the furnishing of production requirements with stable prices, and the granting of agricultural loans with easy terms.

The government has continued its efforts to increase foods in which there is a deficit such as wheat, cereals, fodder, and meat. This is being achieved through leasing land in the southeastern region of the Kingdom where 180,000 dunums have been leased to the private sector at token prices. The government has also continued to survey arable lands with the objective of developing and exploiting them in a manner serving local communities and the national economy. The government is basically taking care of increasing agricultural products and opening new markets, in addition to maintaining traditional markets.

Regarding the irrigation sector, which is firmly connected to the agricultural sector, thank God, the Al-Wahdah Dam agreement was signed between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. Your esteemed House signed the agreement on this dam which stores water that will support the Kingdom's water reserves in general and the water needs in the Jordan Valley in particular. We have begun to bring the technical and economic studies of this big project up to date. The diversion tunnel of this prooject will be executed within the next few months. The laying of the King 'Abdallah canal has also been achieved to continuously irrigate 60,000 additional dunums. The funds allocated to this sector in the 1988 draft budget law are 44.7 million dinars.

II. Industry and Tourism:

The government devotes special care to processing and mining industries in view of their great importance in meeting domestic needs, creating job opportunities and productive investment areas, and supporting the balance of trade by replacing imports and increasing exports. The government has maintained its various measures to support this sector, such as organizing the institutional and financial frameworks of operating companies by encouraging the merger of companies with similar and complementary functions and restructuring the capital of companies facing difficult financial circumstances, while emphasizing the application of specifications that guarantee the quality of production for domestic consumption and exports. The policy has proved its efficacy because the viability of many companies improved. These companies became a support for the national economy while in the past they were a burden on it.

The government is seeking to expand and diversify export and marketing channels with fraternal and friendly countries. The government has also formed a higher committee for chemical industries to exploit the resources of the Dead Sea. The Higher Committee for the Promotion of Tourism has begun its work by drawing up a comprehensive strategy for the development of the tourism sector, the exploitation of available tourist attractions, and the encouragement of investment in such tourist attractions. Allocations earmarked for industry and tourism in the 1988 draft budget law total 26.1 million dinars.

III. Energy, Electricity, and Water:

Among developing countries Jordan enjoys a high level of citizens who receive electricity and water supplies totaling 96 percent of the population. However, we are still almost totally dependent on imported energy.

although the oil taken from the Hamzah oil field provides approximately 1 percent of domestic oil consumption. Therefore, the government is interested in supporting the national program for oil prospecting through our own efforts and through contracts with international companies specialized in that field. At the same time, studies on alternative sources of energy are progressing steadily, particularly on oil shale and recycled energy.

With the help of God natural gas has been discovered in the Al-Rishah area. Measures have been taken to build a power station fuelled by natural gas to supplement the national grid, thus boosting the Kingdom's power generation capability to meet various needs and to reduce our oil imports for that purpose. The government continues to construct and modernize water projects in various parts of the Kingdom. The sum of 60.9 million dinars has been marked in the draft budget law for such activities.

IV. Education and Health:

Great efforts have been made to develop the various stages of the education system and to organize the institutional frameworks of the health system to enable these two systems to provide their services in the best possible manner. However, qualitative development of education and health has not been a substitute for but has complemented quantitative achievement. The government has continued to establish educational and health institutions in various areas and has concentrated on remote areas. One should note the distinguished standard attained by Jordan in education and health. Jordan's universities and hospitals have an excellent reputation in the Arab world and internationally, reflecting Jordan's special capabilities in these two fields.

The achievements recently accomplished in these two sectors—such as the introduction of computers into school curricula, the establishment of the University of Science and Technology and the civilian wing at the University of Mu'tah, and the clear scientific progress in medicine—will all add new dimensions to our capabilities in these two fields. Allocations earmarked for education and health in the draft budget law total 165.8 million dinars.

V. Transportation and Communications:

The government has continued to build main road networks. The work on many of these networks such as the Al-Suwaymah-Al-Mazra'ah road, the Na'ur-Dead Sea road, the ring road around the city of Aqaba, the Al-Azraq-Al-Jafr road, and the Irbid-Thaghrat-Asfur road has been initiated. Many other secondary, village, and agricultural roads are also being built. The government enhanced the capabilities of Aqaba port, began work on a berth and a passenger terminal, and reduced the service tariff at this large port to encourage customers to use it and to enable it to meet the needs of fraternal states. The fleet of Royal Jordanian aircraft is also being modernized and its operations are being supported with the most advanced technical equipment.

As for the wire and wireless communications domain, the process of spreading and upgrading telephone services is continuing throughout the Kingdom. Express mail service and the automated sorting of mail have also been introduced. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is cooperating with both the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic to link the three states through a regional communications network that will also link the northern part of the Kingdom with its southern area. A total of 109.5 million dinars was allocated for transportation and communications in the draft budget law.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, in implementation of royal directives and out of its committment to the pursuit of Jordan's Arab policies, the government has continued its efforts with Arab brothers and reached practical formulas designed to deepen the bases of cooperation and coordination with them. Joint committees that meet periodically have been formed with many fraternal Arab states. We have managed, with God's help, to establish holding investment companies with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Iraq, and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

These companies were entrusted with launching industrial, agricultural, and service projects that seek to open large-scale investment channels which provide nework opportunities, expand markets, and boost self-reliance. The work of the joint Jordanian-Syrian companies has been activated in the interest of the two countries. The government signed many bilateral trade and technical cooperation agreements with fraternal Arab states. It also intends to hold investment seminars in a number of Arab markets following the success of the Jordanian investment seminar, which was held in fraternal Kuwait, to acquaint Arab businessmen with feasible investment areas and the advantages of Arab investment in the Kingdom.

When the Arab leaders enhanced their political will to achieve reconciliation and accord at the Amman summit, prospects for joint Arab action emerged and areas for integration and channels for coordination were made available to states, institutions, and individuals in the great Arab homeland.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, in light of the abovementioned data and within the limits of available sources, the 1988 draft budget law has been drawn up and includes the following main clauses:

I. The Budget Volume: 1.0754 billion dinars, an increase of 6.6 percent over the 1987 re-estimated budget.

II. A. Revenues:

1. Local revenues: 610.9 million dinars.

2. Financial aid: 225 million dinars.

3. Refundable loans: 26.3 million dinars.

Total revenues of the first section: 862.2 million dinars, an increase of 23.5 percent over the 1987 reassessed budget.

B. Expenditures:

1. Current expenditures: 623.8 million dinars.

2. Capital expenditures: 305.3 million dinars.

Total expenses of the first section: 929.1 million dinars, an increase of 2.9 percent over the reassessed 1987 budget.

III. Volume of the Second Section:

Loans and assistance for development: 146.3 million dinars.

It should be noted that the domestic revenues as estimated in the draft budget law will cover 97.9 percent of the estimated current expenditure.

Allocations for expenditures have been earmarked to cover the various sectors as follows:

1. Economic development sectors: 256.1 million dinars.

2. Social and cultural development sectors: 142.4 million dinars.

3. Public administration and finance: 243.2 million dinars.

4. Defense and security: 256 million dinars.

5. Servicing domestic and foreign loans: 177.7 million dinars.

Total: 1.0754 billion dinars.

IV. The Deficit:

The deficit in the 1988 draft budget law is estimated at 66.9 million dinars. It will be covered through an improvement in revenues, control of expenditures, and domestic and foreign loans. It should be noted that the draft budget law allocates 58 million dinars to contribute to and support public institutions.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, praise be to God, Jordan has succeeded in accomplishing economic achievement for the country and its citizens and has bolstered international confidence in its economy. The support of Arab brothers and their understanding of our role in confrontation and steadfastness have contributed toward our achievement. In gratitude, we extend thanks to the brothers who fulfilled their financial obligations, foremost among them the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We are confident that the brothers whose circumstances have not allowed them to pay their aid contributions so far will fulfill their obligations.

I thank the Japanese Government for its initiative, the governments of other friendly countries, and officials in charge of Arab funds and regional and international organizations for their continued response to our development needs and their confidence in the Jordanian economy.

Mr Speaker, honorable representatives, our confidence in the close cooperation and the importance of continued consultation between the legislative and executive authorities is the best incentive for us to continue our constructive efforts to serve our homeland under the leader of the nation and the guardian of the march, His Majesty King Husayn. Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

Lower House Endorses 1987 Budget Supplement

JN081338 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8 Dec 87 p 3

[Text] Amman—The Lower House of Parliament on Monday endorsed by a majority vote a JD 61.4 million supplement to the 1987 budget, but only after an extensive debate among deputies on the need to curb public spending and after securing a government pledge to control such spending. Although Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i told the House the Cabinet had agreed to the House's previous calls for the need to narrow down the deficit, he said the government could not lower its spending.

"We cannot take any measures to reduce our spending. But, we are taking steps to control public spending through channelling it in the right direction for the benefit of the citizens and the national economy," the prime minister said.

Mr. al-Rifa'i said the total deficit in the two supplements to the 1986 and 1987 budgets stood at JD 205.4 million and not at JD 420 million, as suggested by Amman Deputy Latyth. The 1987 budget stood at JD 1.019 billion with a deficit of JD 39.6 million. The prime minister also indicated that Jordan's accumulated debt was JD 259.7 million and not JD 500 million, as put by Mr. Shubaylat. He expressed hope that the Arab states would meet their financial commitments to Jordan, in light of the successful conclusion of the Nov. 8-11 extraordinary Arab summit held in Amman.

He gave no figure on the overdue commitments which were to be paid to Jordan by Arab countries in line with pledges made at the 1978 Baghdad summit to support the steadfastness of frontline states. Mr. al-Rifa'i said these overdues "exceeded Jordan's accumulated deficit many times over."

Four months ago, Parliament approved a JD 141 million spending beyond the 1986 budget but after legislators were promised by the government that it would not resort to issuing supplements without prior approval by the Senate and Lower House. This compromise ended a dispute between the government and lawmakers since any spending that exceeded allocations made in each fiscal budget should have prior approval by the two Houses.

Mr. al-Rifa'i said then that the JD 141 million supplement did not represent expenditures made in 1986 as such, but were also an accumulation of spending done between 1972 and 1985. The JD 61.4 million supplement for 1987 did not detail the deficit. It provided a breakdown of the total figure under the following provisions; JD 26,035,300 (recurrent expenditure), JD 23,101,500 (capital expenditure), and JD 12,208,000 (development expenditure) that is financed through loans and aid packages.

However, Mr. al-Rifa'i explained that the projected deficit for 1987 was JD 88.7 million—JD 39.6 million as expected in the 1987 budget plus the deficit in the supplement—JD 49.1 million.

No details were available on projects which benefited from the spending envisaged by this supplement. But discussions among deputies revealed that JD 12,208,000 was spent by the government for the purchase of the Queen Alia Hospital, and another JD 35.916 million went for financing a project to build the Al-Azraq highway.

In addition to endorsing the supplementary budget draft law the House referred to its financial committee the JD 1.075 billion draft budget for 1988 and endorsed a number of laws covering military servicemen, the Jordan Economic and Social Organisation for retired servicemen and others.

The House Financial Committee, which studied the 1987 supplement, made several remarks, one of which said that "a number of items included in the supplement were not that urgent and could have been delayed to become part of the 1988 budget."

Although the committee said it was well-aware that Jordan's revenues from local and international sources were limited, it reiterated previous calls to control public spending, in general, and current expenditures, in particular, and to improve the means of collecting local revenues and lowering the budgeted deficits.

Deputies Saubaylat,, Riyad al-Nawaysah (Karak) and 'Abdallah al-'Abaylah (Tafileh), who are members of the House Financial Committee, made a number of reservations on the committee's decisions regarding the supplement. Mr. Ahmad al-Kufahi (Irbid) said he agreed with Dr. al-'Aqaylah's reservations over the necessity of including the Al-Azraq-Al-Jafr highway in the supplement. Describing the supplements issued with such large amounts as "an unhealthy phenomena," Mr. al-Kufahi called for cancelling this project and channelling the money into decreasing the general public debt and creating new jobs for Jordan's unemployed citizens. He said there were other roads that could act as a substitute for this projected highway.

Moreover, Dr al-Nawaysah said the issuing of the supplement only reveals the insistence on increasing expenditure though loans and "piling up the national debt beyond bearable boundaries."

Mr. Shubaylat, who termed as "dangerous" the process of financing the projected deficit through direct loans to the Treasury, as opposed to increasing savings and exports, called on the government to commit itself not to issue any future budgets based on projected deficits.

Dr. al-Nawaysah said he believed that "90 per cent of expenditures included in the supplement" fall short of being categorised as urgent spending.

Mr. al-Rifa'i explained to Deputy Shubaylat that the entire budgeting process was based on "estimates of both the revenues and expenditures." Mr. al-Rifa'i questioned what Mr. Shubaylat's measure suggested should the amount of direct taxes fall below the expected level: "Would you suggest raising the direct taxes to met the budget's projected figures? Or would you suggest increasing duty customs at a time when the consumer, the citizen and the producer are urging the government to ease the tax burdens? Or would you suggest the halting of all developmental projects, eventually leading to an economic recession and adding more financial burdens to the Treasury due to a decline in incoming revenues?"

The prime minister said it was easy to prepare a budget under the slogan "a budget without deficit," but added that due to various considerations, the deficit was there to stay.

Despite all of these conditions, "we have maintained the stability of prices, lowered the deficit in the balance of trade by decreasing imports and increasing exports, have maintained our revenues derived from local taxes and have supported the local production sector," he said.

Reiterating Jordan's economic and financial policies, Mr. al-Rifa'i said the government was adopting constant measures to improve the process of collecting local revenues without adding any new financial burdens on the citizens or on the economic sectors. "All our policies aim at revitalising the economic activities, which, in turn, would improve local revenues," the prime minister stressed. He said the government managed to cover 91 per cent of its 1987 current expenditures from local revenues and expected the ratio to increase to 96 per cent during 1988. "Our aim is to cover all our current expenditures from local revenues," he said.

Mr. al-Rifa'i explained that public spending was important for increasing the gross domestic product (GDP), and for maintaining the Kingdom's financial commitments to local and international sources.

On capital expenditure covered by Arab aid programmes and local as well as foreign loans, Mr. al-Rifa'i explained that aid given to Jordan from the Arab states "was sometimes affected by the economic conditions in the donor countries. Hence, we sometimes resort to national and foreign borrowing to execute important programmes aimed at improving the quality of life for Jordanians." However, Mr. al-Rifa'i indicated that the government was adhering to certain fiscal policies to lower Jordan's national debt. Under this arrangement, the government is repaying its general public debt by amounts that exceed any new borrowing.

Another problem, the prime minister noted, was unbalanced tenor between the date of collecting local revenues, such as taxes and other fees, and the time of the actual spending. Hence, the government is forced to resort to short-term borrowing to meet these commitments, which, in turn, renders new interests that cannot be evaluated in the draft budget.

Responding to remarks made by Dr. al-'Aqaylah on a contract which was awarded to a coalition of two Indian construction companies for work on a 180-kilometre section of the new Al-Azraq-Al-Jafr highway linking Jordan and Iraq, Mr. al-Rifa'i said the award was given to the two companies upon the request of the Indian Government. He told Dr. al-'Aqaylah that a parallel offer made by another Indian company could not be considered as official since it was in the form of a letter to the Ministry of Public Works and came immediately after the contract was signed. The contract was signed earlier this year and work has already started on the stretch.

Dr. al-'Aqaylah expressed reservations over the choice of an offer which he said was at least $30 million higher than the offer made by the other company. Mr. al-Rifa'i corrected the figure, saying the difference between the offer given by the Indian coalition company and the other was JD 3 million (10 million) and not $30 million.

The coalition company will build the road from reinforced concrete blocks—a technique which will utilise around 4.1 million tonnes of cement produced by the ailing Jordan South Cement factory at a cost of nearly JD 8.5 million.

The prime minister said that the balance of trade between Jordan and India was in favour of the Kingdom, with India importing Jordanian potash, phosphates and fertilisers worth more than $100 million. He said that in addition to maintaining the level of imports of Jordanian potash, fertilisers and phosphates, India would increase its imports of these three minerals to a level equal to 30 per cent of the contract's total value.

Mr. al-Rifa'i explained that the Indian Government asked Jordan to award construction contract to Indian companies to be named by the Cabinet in New Delhi in view of the fact that Jordan was unable to import more Indian goods as a means to correct the imbalance in bilateral trade relations.

Since India was a main market for Jordanian products and the government is keen on maintaining that, Jordan agreed to the Indian Government's request to award the contract to a coalition of two Indian companies, according to the prime minister.

The price of the contract, Mr. al-Rifa'i said, was near the estimated cost made by Jordanian officials from the Ministry of Public Works and based on the specifications of major Jordanian highways. Following negotiations between the two sides, the Indian coalition agreed to lower its initial demand for the road's construction from JD 38.5 million to JD 35.916 million.

Dr. al-'Aqaylah stated another reservation over a $60 million loan entered between the government and Banco de Brazil for the purchase of vehicles for the Public Security Department and said "such purchases were not on the list of our urgent priorities in such a difficult financial situation."

Mr. al-Rifa'i pointed out that the correct figure for the loan is $46 million and not $60 million, as suggested by the Tafilah deputy. He said that Mr. al-'Aqaylah remarks represented his "personal view" and not the official view which decides on the security forces' need for vehicles, equipment and machinery.

The session also ratified two loan agreement between the Government of Jordan and the Saudi Fund for Development and the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Socioeconomic Development, respectively. The former loan will be used for financing part of the Faculty of Sciences at the Jordan University of Sciences and Technology and the latter will be used to fund phase two of the Aqaba Thermal Power Station.

Dudin Affirms Adherence to Development Plan

JN081401 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 8 Dec 87 pp 21, 24

[Text] Marwan Dudin, minister of occupied territories affairs, has affirmed Jordan's adherence to the development plan in the occupied Arab territory, which seeks to promote citizens' standards of living by providing job opportunities. In a statement to AFP yesterday, the minister said it will not be easy to carry out such a program under present conditions since it concerns a territory totally controlled by the enemy. There will always be a danger that this plan might not only benefit the Palestinian people but also the Israeli economy.

The minister added: Jordan has recently formed nine committees in the occupied territory to follow up financial measures and to supervise what is being spent on projects. These committees represent Jerusalem, Janin, Nabulus, Tulkarm, Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Gaza. The minister stated that it was decided in 1987 to embark on projects for which $13 million were allocated. These projects cover the sectors of health, education, electricity, water supply, and the building of new roads in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

A monthly sum of $1 million a month was allocated to provide direct monthly assistance to lawyers, engineers, and teachers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Jordan received $19.5 million from the United States as a contribution to this development plan. Jordan also deducts $10 million a year from its budget to finance this project.

The minister stated that the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee allocated $18 million to the occupied territory as of 30 November last. The activities of this committee were suspended in 1986 due to a shortage in funds, but Saudi Arabia reactivated this committee by providing a sum of $6.5 million. It also paid an equal sum at the beginning of last November. The committee is scheduled to hold a meeting in Amman on 13 January.

Israeli Tanks, Vehicles Cross to Jazzin

NC082038 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Reports say that more than 60 Israeli vehicles, including armored vehicles and tanks, have passed the crossing points Israel has set up on the border with Lebanon. The reports note that the vehicles are heading toward the Jazzin and western Al-Biqa' axes.

Israeli Jets Conduct Mock Raids Over Sidon

NC090548 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0529 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] We have just been informed that Israeli warplanes have been conducting mock raids over Sidon since 0710 today. The Israeli aircraft are being confronted with antiaircraft fire.

Resistance Attacks Israeli, Lahd Positions

NC090701 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Resistance men in the south have carried out three new operations against the Israeli occupation forces and agent Lahd militiamen in the Tallat Haddathah, Tallat Rshaf, and Kafr Killa-Dayr Mimas triangle. Artillery of the occupation forces shelled the liberated areas bordering the security strip. The Israeli military authorities in occupied Jerusalem have admitted that one Israeli soldier was killed and another was wounded in the Tallat Rshaf operation.

According to security sources in the south, a resistance group attacked a Lahd militia position in Tallat Haddathah at dawn yesterday. They used machineguns and RPG's in the 15-minute operation, which began at 0515. The occupation forces retaliated by indiscriminately shelling the liberated villages bordering the security strip in the Bint Jubayl area for 90 minutes. The Israeli forces fired flares to illuminate the villages of Haddathah, Tibnin, and Yatir.

Reports from the south note that a loud explosion was heard at 1100 yesterday. It transpired that resistance men had detonated an explosive device as a joint Israeli-Lahd militia patrol was passing on the way to the occupation's post at Tallat Rshaf. An enemy armored personnel carrier was destroyed. Two Israeli helicopters were seen landing at the site of the operation and evacuating the casualties suffered by the patrol.

Parliament Sets Number of Deputies for Quorum

NC081617 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Excerpt] A joint meeting of parliamentary committees today settled the constitutional argument about the legal quorum at sessions of the Chamber of Deputies. The committees approved a bill submitted by Deputy Hasan al-Rifa'i, setting the number of deputies at 79 [the original number was 99, but 19 died and Amin al-Jumayyuil became president] for the purpose of calculating the legal quorum. However, this will not affect the provisions of the Elections Law or the number of constituencies, as Speaker Husayn al-Husayni has explained. [passage omitted]

Ba'th Party, Spanish CP Issue Communique
JN082110 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1215 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] A joint communique on the talks between an Arab Socialist Ba'th Party delegation and a Spanish Communist Party delegation was issued in Damascus today. The communique says: At the invitation of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party National Command, a Spanish Communist Party delegation headed by Juan Francisco, member of the party Secretariat and Executive Committee, visited Syria 1-7 December 1987.

During this visit, the delegation held party and political talks with an Arab Socialist Ba'th Party delegation headed by Comrade Fawwaz Sayyagh, Ba'th Party National Command reserve member. The talks were dominated by an atmosphere of mutual trust and profound understanding of the two parties' struggle against imperialism, Zionism, and racism.

The communique affirms that the framework for achieving a just and comprehensive peace in this region is an international conference under UN auspices attended by all concerned parties, as well as the five permanent UN Security Council members. The communique asserts that the basis for achieving this peace is the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from all Arab territories and the restoration of the Palestinian Arab people's national rights.

The communique says: When discussing the situation in the Lebanese arena, the two sides condemned the continuation of the Israeli forces' occupation of Lebanese territory and affirmed the need for an immediate Israeli withdrawal. They also affirmed full support for and solidarity with the Lebanese nationalist and progressive forces' struggle, as well as Syria's efforts to safeguard Lebanon's unity, Arabism, and the safety of its territory; to achieve a national reconciliation; and to establish democracy in Lebanon.

The communique adds: When reviewing the situation in the Mediterranean Basin and the Gulf, the two delegations affirmed the need to exert all efforts to turn the Mediterrnean into a peaceful lake free of nuclear weapons and foreign fleets. The two sides also called for the withdrawal of the U.S. and allied fleets from the Arabian Gulf to maintain security, stability, and freedom of navigation.

As an expression of the two parties' desire to promote bilateral relations in the service of their joint interests, it has been agreed to sign an agreement for joint cooperation for 1988-89.

Commentary Notes 'Great Importance' of Summit
JN081605 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1230 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Station commentary]

[Text] There is no dispute over the great importance of the Washington summit between Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President Ronald Reagan in Washington today. This meeting is especially important since our world has not reaped the fruits of the two previous summits in Reykjavik and Geneva, which were to have been first steps toward a less dangerous future for mankind and greater optimism about security and peace for the nations of the globe.

We believe that no one can belittle the importance of the two superpowers sitting down at one table to sign an agreement eliminating intermediate and short-range missiles after the long years of the arms race, which has held the whole world hostage to nuclear weapons which threaten to destroy it. The peoples of all nations, including those of the Soviet Union and the United States, agree on these facts regardless of the limits of the Soviet-U.S. agreement, the weapons to be left in the arsenals, and the strategic defense plans, some of which are still under study and research.

Just as this agreement will result in greater security for the Soviet and American peoples and their allies in Europe, the other nations, especially those of the Third World, will also have an increased share of this security. Any relaxation in international tensions and any abandonment of force will help lift injustice from the peoples who are being exposed to aggression, occupation, hegemony, and domination, which has characterized U.S. policy in the second half of this century.

With all its military might and international weight, the United States has acted against peoples who maintained their independence during that time in human history. The United States used to threaten these peoples with its nuclear arsenal, fleets, and air bases whenever they raised their voices to demand justice and whenever a nation decided to adhere to its right to freedom, sovereignty, peace, and defense of its national soil. We may be one of the nations that has suffered from this U.S. behavior and reaction to our calls for justice and freedom in the wake of the plot that established the Zionist entity on our land.

This entity has become a U.S. base, full of weapons and danger, threatening our entire nation. It has in effect become one of the states of the United States, provided by successive U.S. administrations with more weapons and money than it needs to carry out its expansionist plan at the expense of Arab land, interests, and aspirations to development, unity, and progress.

Hence, like other nations that aspire to justice and freedom, we will bless any international detente based on mankind's interests and any effort to ease the tensions threatening our world, achieve disarmament, and abide by the UN Charter and resolutions. We adhere to our right to defend our land, history, and interests. At the same time, we are loyal to the international charters and support the UN resolutions on various regional issues, including our just cause in occupied Palestine.

The Washington summit, which can be viewed as one of the most important events in the recent history of international relations for its success in overcoming obstacles and reaching a peace agreement to save the world from destructive weapons as part of an overall banning of nuclear weapons, will be even more important if it deals with regional disputes and searches for just solutions to them within international law and resolutions and in light of each nations's right to self-determination and its aspiratiosn to sovereignty and independence.

'Victory' Claimed in UN General Assembly Vote

JN082049 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1915 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] New York—The UN General Assembly adopted a recommendation yesterday supporting Syria's call for an international conference that will define terrorism and distinguish it from the struggle for liberation. This recommendation was supported by 153 countries and the United States and the Zionist entity were the only ones to oppose it.

Reports say the U.S. delegate in the UN General Assembly vehemently objected to the recommendation because it stipulates that the people who live under occupation or under racist and colonialist authorities have the right to struggle to gain their independence.

The recommendation also stipulates that the agreement on an acknowledged definition of terrorism will help in combating terrorism.

The United States previously abstained from voting on holding such a conference when the issue was discussed at the level of one of the UN committees. Thus, the Zionist entity was the only country to oppose it at the time.

Following the vote, many representatives stressed that the opposition by Washington and Tel Aviv to a conference to define terrorism and distinguish it from the struggle for liberation stems from Israel's policy based on terrorism, expansion, and aggression. These representatives stressed that the UN General Assembly's endorsement of such a conference is a victory for Syria, which has called for it. Arab and African diplomats welcomed the recommendation and said they are certain it will provide support for legitimate liberation movements.

Afghanistan

Keshtmand Welcomes Summit, INF Treaty

LD090854 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0506 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Kabul, December 8, BAKHTAR—This is the third time that summit meeting is being held between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States which has brought about a favourable atmosphere of understanding in international arena, says S.A. Keshtmand, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan in connection with the visit of Mikhail Gorbachev to the United States.

The present visit of Gorbachev to the United States, Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand added, is one of the important and historical measures taken by the leadership of the Soviet Union in this direction.

The treaty on the complete elimination of medium and (?shorter-range) missiles is to be signed between M.S. Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in Washington tonight. The treaty is the first in its kind towards the real disarmament as well as the most important treaty on the limitation and reduction of nuclear stockpiles.

Likewise, fifty percent reduction of offensive strategic weapons will be discussed at the [words indistinct] which in its turn enjoys special significance for the elimination of offensive strategic weapons and finally for the world free of nuclear weapons, emphasized S.A. Keshtmand.

The extraordinary significance of the treaty is also inherent in the fact that the movement towards the reduction and eventually the eradication of nuclear weapons releases a considerable amount of financial resources and put it at the service of the progressive objectives of the developing countries.

Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand viewed that the signing of the treaty builds up an atmosphere of confidence which is an important factor for the consolidation of peace and in the final analysis for the creation of a non-violent world free of nuclear weapons.

Thus, the visit has drawn the attention of the world people and it can not be ignored that the conclusion of such a treaty can be provided in the light of a new political thinking which the restructuring policy in the Soviet Union is one of its clear manifestations.

The Republic of Afghanistan believes that talks will also be held between the leaders of the two countries on regional conflicts in Central America, South Africa, Middle East and the Gulf including the situation around Afghanistan, said the prime minister.

Accordingly, the Republic of Afghanistan in its turn welcomes such an accord which would be conducive to the interest of stabilisation and consolidation of peace and cessation of war and bloodshed, stressed Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand.

The leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan wishes every greater successes for the both sides to reach agreement.

CPSU Expresses Thanks for GOSR Greetings

LD082249 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Replying to the congratulatory message of President Najibullah and Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshmand of the Republic of Afghanistan on the occasion of the October Revolution, the following message was sent to them by the CPSU Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet Presidium, and the USSR Council of Ministers:

Comrade Najibullah, president of Afghanistan; Comrade Sultan 'Ali Keshmand, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan:

Accept our cordial gratitude and pleasure at your friendly congratulations and good wishes on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution [GOSR]. The people of the Soviet Union celebrate this occasion with great enthusiam for the expansion of democracy and revolutionary reconstruction.

The principles of the peace-loving policy of the Soviet Union were laid down during the first years of the revolution and 70 years of the life of the first socialist country in the world have proven its vitality. Our relations with friendly neighboring Afghanistan are based on these principles. We in the Soviet Union follow the life of the people in Afghanistan, which is now defending its national independence and its right to self-determination on the basis of national reconciliation and national accord under the conditions of an undeclared war of internal and external reactionaries and persistent foreign interference in the affairs of a country enjoying national sovereignty and passing through a sensitive and difficult stage.

We believe in the success of the national reconciliation policy, which is responsive to the interests of all people and is duty bound to establish permanent peace in the land of Afghanistan. We wish you total health and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan.

[Signed] The CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, and the USSR Council of Ministers

'Dozens' Killed in Factional Fighting in Kabul

BK081501 Hong Kong AFP in English 1448 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 8 (AFP)—Dozens of soldiers and civilians were killed in factional fighting in the Afghanistan capital, Kabul, last week, Western diplomats said here Tuesday.

They said the clashes between Afghan Government troops and those loyal to former resistance commander Ismatullah Muslim, who defected to the government in 1985 and was made a general, left at least 37 people dead.

The diplomats said 15 people were killed in a shootout on November 30 when tht general tried to force his way into a pro-government "Loya Jirgah," or Grand Assembly which was being addressed by Afghan leader Najibullah, who was elected president for a seven-year term at the meeting.

Six of Gen. Muslim's bodyguards were killed in the shootout, the diplomats said. An AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE correspondent in Kabul last week to attend the Loya Jirgah reported that at least nine people died in the half-hour clash, which erupted when Gen. Muslim tried to break through a roadblock.

The diplomats here said Gen. Muslim, a member of the ruling Revolutionary Council, was admitted to a Kabul government hospital with a leg wound. He escaped from the hospital Friday, they added.

Hours later after the November 30 clash, Afghan troops, mostly police known as Sarandoy, staged an attack with heavy weapons on Gen. Muslim's residence in the Wazir Akbar Khan area of Kabul, killing 22 people, the diplomats said.

Women and children were among the casualties, they said, and several civilians were killed in crossfire.

Gen. Muslim has been at odds with Interior Minister Sayyed Muhammed Gulabzoy, who is also in charge of the Sarandoy troops who barred his entry to the Loya Jirgah in Kabul, the diplomats said.

The diplomats said that Afghan Government troops clashed with Gen. Muslim's forces at other places in Kabul and arrested some of his men.

They said Gen. Muslim's men took two Afghan secret police officers hostage in Kabul's Shahr-e Now area and were apparently still holding them.

On Friday, some four dozen followers of Gen. Muslim helped him escape from the hospital, shooting the hospital administrator when he tried to block their way, the diplomats said. His current whereabouts are unknown, they added.

Gen. Muslim has been in command of several thousand Afghan militia troops guarding the strategic Qandahar-Spin Buldak highway linking Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The diplomats said that troops loyal to Gen. Muslim continued to control key roads in Qandahar Province.

They said he was continuing to block Afghan rebel traffic on the Qandahar-Spin Buldak highway but his open break with the regime could jeopardise government control in the south.

Afghan resistance fighters reportedly overran a series of Soviet-Afghan posts in Qandahar last week.

Yunis Khalis on Recent U.S. Visit, Alliance

PM031101 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 29 Nov 87 p 8

[Interview with Muhammad Yunis Khalis, leader of the Islamic alliance of the Afghan mujahidin, by Muhammad Tulbah and Hasan 'Aqili in Jeddah; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] ['UKAZ] We know you as a fighter in both the military and diplomatic fields. We would like to hear from you the news of the jihad in combat positions, as well as the results of your recent tour in the United States.

[Khalis] With regard to the jihad, I can tell you that we are fine, praise be to God. The mujahidin are achieving one victory after another. During my visit to the United States, I contacted Afghan brothers who told me that they had engaged in fierce battles in the two areas of Konar and Khowst, at which time 10 planes were downed and many enemy centers were seized. The Soviet commander there committed suicide in view of the fact that he had failed to block the road to Qandahar. In short, it can be said that we, thanks to Almighty God, are achieving victories and that our losses are no more than 1/10 of the losses inflicted on the Soviets and communists.

As for the diplomatic side, I headed a delegation to the United Nations. At the same time, Soviet and communist propaganda campaigns intensified in an attempt to convince the world that the Kabul regime is a legitimate government and that the mujahidin are merely aggressive rebels. Under these circumstances some faction leaders feared the results of this year's vote.

Praise be to God, we contacted a large number of ambassadors and were able to reveal the truth behind Soviet and communist deception. We explained to them that we are proponents of Islam, which calls for peace. God has granted us success in the form of major support. The number of votes demanding the withdrawal of the Soviets from Afghanistan was more numerous than last year.

['UKAZ] Your meeting with U.S. President Reagan held the attention of the media throughout the world. There were differing views on it. Some observers considered it a diplomatic victory for the mujahidin, whereas others viewed it as a U.S. attempt to contain the Afghan jihad. What do you say?

[Khalis] We did not ask for a meeting with Reagan. Indeed, he asked for a meeting. The delegation's members differed over whether to accept the invitation. My opinion was: We live within an international community. We are not isolated from it, and as long as we adhere to our principles and stands, there is no harm in meeting Reagan. [passage omitted]

Therefore, I would say that we did not go to the United States to place Afghanistan in Reagan's lap. We talked to the whole world, represented by the United Nations, explaining the danger imposed by the Soviets, who are testing their weapons in Afghanistan so that they can begin with the Islamic world first and then turn on the entire world. Thus, the idea that the meeting with Reagan was an attempt to contain the jihad is a mistaken one, since we sought support from the whole world, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, not the United States in particular. We stressed that we would not accept conditional or restricted support. We also informed them that we will not lay down our arms as long as there are any communists in Afghanistan.

['UKAZ] Was the alliance of mujahidin launched to mend the rift among Afghan jihad factions, and was it the beginning of the formation of an interim government?

[Khalis] Praise be to God, Who helped us to transform the state of alliance among mujahidin factions into a merger in order to block the gap through which enemies tried to penetrate in an effort to distort our image. They claimed that the mujahidin were disunited and had no representative with powers to talk on their behalf or to take political action as a leader. We have united, and my brothers chose me to be leader of the alliance at present and head of the mujahidin government after the Soviet withdrawal, in which they will be ministers. This government will base its laws on the glorious Koran and the noble sunnah of the prophet.

['UKAZ] It is being reported that a Russian withdrawal is imminent and that a coalition government will soon be formed in which the mujahidin may participate alongside the other parties. What is your opinion?

[Khalis] Such reports have been made by Soviet agents after they realized that the Muslim Afghan people are determined to continue their jihad, even if this means their total annihilation. The call for national reconciliation and a coalition government is mere deception and slyness. They are trying to conceal their aggression and oppression under these idle words and proposals. How can we accept the idea of the Soviets bringing in an agent government aboard their tanks and planes? How can we agree to a few communists participating in running our affairs? This would mean that the United States could also impose some of its agents on any state and then begin a massacre that would not stop until it called for a national accord and a coalition government including those agents. If we accepted the formation of such a coalition government, we would be establishing a base for the colonization of weak countries.

['UKAZ] Hashemi-Rafsanjani stated recently that talks were held between Iran and the Soviet Union with a view to concluding a joint defense agreement. Do you believe that Soviet-Iranian rapprochement will be at the expense of the Afghan problem?

[Khalis] We know well that the Iranian regime is following the Al-Taqiyah approach [in Shi'ite sect, dissimulation of one's religion in the face of a threat], in the sense that it says one thing but conceals another. While the Iranian representative to the United Nations was delivering a good speech declaring his country's support for us, the Iranians were seizing our arms, killing our mujahidin, and escalating the war with Iraq. I believe the Iranian Government is behaving like someone drowning at sea, who will grasp at anything. It does not pursue a clear line. According to what I have mentioned, it can be said that Iran is siding with the Soviets and that an Iranian-Soviet rapprochement may have an impact on the Afghan problem. [passage omitted]

Mujahidin Leader Denies Receiving U.S. Arms

PM081025 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic
2 Dec 87 p 12

[Interview with mujahidin "Field Commander" Ghulam Dastagir, by Muhammad Talbah, Ziyad Ghunaym, and Fahim Hamid 'Ali; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] ['UKAZ] We would like to know about the situation of the Afghan jihad from you, in your capacity as one of the leaders who has lived in the trenches.

[Dastagir] In general, we can say that we are confident of God's victory. When the battles and the fighting rage fiercely, the morale of the mujahidin rises, because they are aware that God is supporting them at every moment.

The recent battles between us and the forces of the Soviet puppet regime have in effect led them to an inevitable conclusion that there is no way of confronting men who believe in God and who are armed with the weapon of faith. For example, we can verify the accuracy of that conclusion by examining the outcome of the fighting in the Haji region last Ramadan—which was, as far as the enemy was concerned, the last attempt to close the borders against the mujahidin. However, the mujahidin were able to attack their garrisons and inflict casualties

which reached around 15,000 killed or wounded. The Soviet commander, who promised victory to Gorbachev after 23 days of fighting, killed himself.

['UKAZ] We know weapons are one means of achieving political hegemony. It has been said recently that you are being supplied your weapons needs from the United States and Western states. Do you believe that these weapons could become an instrument to impose wills which could be at odds with what the mujahidin want?

[Dastagir] Our main source of weapons is the spoils of war from the communists and Soviets. In the past 9 years we have been able to obtain many weapons and much ammunition from the unbelievers, both through what we obtain after our battles with them and through what comes to us from those who join our ranks.

It is being said that the mujahidin are dependent on the U.S. for weapons. This is nothing more than a U.S. lie which aims to create a role for the United States in the victories we have achieved. I am able to confirm that I and the forces under my command have not used U.S. weapons a single day in our war against the communists and the Soviets. Many reporters have come to us and they have confirmed the truth of what I am saying.

['UKAZ] What is the story concerning the "Stinger"?

[Dastagir] I do not know the story, despite the fact that I am carrying out the jihad in a very sensitive position on the heights overlooking Kabul. There was no more than 22 km between me and Babrak Karmal previously and Najibullah right now. I can see the lights of Kabul from my positions. "Stinger"—I have only heard about it from the media, and so have the men working with me, who number around 900 mujahidin.

If you were to place a Stinger next to various weapons and missiles, I would not be able to tell the difference between them.

['UKAZ] We have also come to know from you that you are using locally manufactured weapons. Do you have weapons factories?

[Dastagir] In the village of Um al-Khalil, between Pakistan and Afghanistan, there is a group of tribes which is favored by a special position, and they are assuming the task of defending themselves. These tribes are manufacturing light weapons. They also have stores which display RPG's, Kalashnikovs, and LBM's [expansion unknown]. [passage omitted]

['UKAZ] What are your future expectations of the Afghan jihad?

[Dastagir] We assure you that the future of the jihad in Afghanistan is bright. Every hour the Soviets and communists taste the bitterness of defeat. Consequently, their clamor has increased recently, urging national reconciliation and a cease-fire. God willing, we will not put down our weapons until the last communist soldier leaves our pure land, which has received over 1 million martyrs. [passage omitted]

Mujahidin Now 'United' Under Yunis Khalis

PM081037 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic
2 Dec 87 p 12

[Interview with Khalil Ahmad, "foreign relations official with the Afghan mujahidin," by Muhammad Tulbah, Ziyad Ghunaym, and Fahim Hamid 'Ali; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] ['UKAZ] What was the nature of the talks held recently between the mujahidin delegation and U.S. President Reagan?

[Ahmad] The meeting with Reagan was within the framework of expanded efforts to explain the Afghan problem to the whole world. Our objective was not, as reported by Western news agencies, to ask for U.S. aid. This is because we are Muslims and do not accept any help except from our Muslim brothers, since they, rather than others, should help us.

['UKAZ] Could you throw light on the nature of the present relationship among mujahidin factions?

[Ahmad] The relationship among mujahidin factions has moved from the state of eliminating differences to a state of alliance, which has consequently transformed into a merger under combatant Muhammad Yunis Khalis. Praise be to God, we consider the merger a successful step on the road to unifying the jihad in Afghanistan. Leader Yunis Khalis now represents the mujahidin and conveys the viewpoint of all factions.

['UKAZ] On your arrival we heard that fighting has intensified in the northern areas. Do you have anything new on the results of current fighting?

[Ahmad] Recent fighting in northern areas has proved that the mujahidin are achieving successive victories under one leadership. Thanks be to God, the area of Koran va Monjan has been liberated after 4 years of occupation, during which we were able to inflict heavy losses on the enemy in both lives and equipment. We also seized huge quantities of arms and ammunition. Large numbers of communists and Soviets have joined our ranks after embracing Islam. Kabul is now within the reach of our guns.

['UKAZ] What type of aid do the mujahidin receive from abroad? And what do they need from the Islamic world?

[Ahmad] We receive aid from many Islamic states; we do not accept any non-Islamic aid. Islamic aid has a great role in boosting the morale of the mujahidin. We devote our thanks to the government of the custodian of the two holy mosques, which spares no efforts in supporting us. [passage omitted]

['UKAZ] And how is the situation after the launch of the Afghan mujahidin alliance?

[Ahmad] The mujahidin are now united under the banner of unification and one leadership. We are now seeking to form an interim government and we shall continue our jihad at all levels until the last communist soldier evacuates from our territory. We must ignore their talk of national accord and their call for peace and an end to the fighting, because these are idle claims by which they want to distract the mujahidin from their jihad and prevent Muslims from helping us. [passage omitted]

['UKAZ] There is Zionist propaganda claiming that the Afghan territories are the main source of drugs in the world and that the drugs are produced by the mujahidin themselves. What do you say?

[Ahmad] Islam prohibits drugs and we, as Muslims, maintain the sanctity of our true Islamic religion. Obviously the mujahidin do not allow anything prohibited to be grown in their territories. But this is taking place in some villages belonging to the agent regime, which encourages the villagers to grow drugs on a large scale in order to flood world markets and then attach this moral accusation to the mujahidin in order to distort the image of the jihad—a charge of which both the mujahidin and the jihad are innocent. [passage omitted]

Presidium Decree Provides Visitors Assistance

LD070939 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0457 GMT 7 Dec 87

[Text] Kabul, December 6, BAKHTAR—Based on the decree of the Presidium of Revolutionary Council dated October 29, the Afghans abroad wishing to visit their relatives in Afghanistan should refer to Afghan diplomatic missions in abroad in order to extend the validity term of their passports and to attain the available forms, says an announcement of Afghanistan.

If such forms are not available at the Afghan diplomatic missions abroad, the Afghan visitors will be provided with such forms at the airports and at the land borders, the announcement adds.

Correction to Text of Approved Constitution

This correction pertains to the item headlined "Text of Constitution Approved at Grand Assembly," published in the 4 December Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT on page 57:

Column one, paragraph one ends: ...state of emergency:

1. The extension of the tenure of office of the National Assembly. (supplying dropped paragraph)

Bangladesh

Ershad Interviewed on Opposition, Gulf War

PM081421 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 6 Dec 87 p 4

[Interview with President Hussain Mohammad Ershad by 'Ali Mudhish in Dhaka; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Mudhish] News agencies tend to paint a dark picture of what is happening in your country in view of the fierce uprising of the opposition. We in the Saudi Arabian Kingdom are concerned that Bangladesh remain a lake of peace enjoying tranquility and stability, rather than be the minefield that the media is exploring. Mr President, what is the truth behind what is happening?

[Ershad] Bangladesh used to enjoy both peace and stability in the region comprising India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. But, regrettably, clashes and confrontations have erupted recently in the country. God willing, we hope that we will be able to overcome these regrettable incidents and rebellion in the near future.

[Mudhish] The government has detained a number of opposition leaders. Has the president managed to bring the situation under control by this means?

[Ershad] We began to live a democratic life after the previous parliament was elected. We are still proceeding along the same road. Under the Constitution, all parties have the right to hold meetings. We did not oppose such meetings. However, beginning on 20 November, after the recent regrettable incidents in the country, we took measures necessary to put an end to these destructive acts which the opposition parties started last 10 November. I made great efforts to stop these acts, but it was impossible. However, I will take any measures needed to end such acts. [passage omitted]

[Mudhish] How can negotiations be held with the opposition while they are being detained?

[Ershad] We asked the opposition to hold talks with us and we called on them to work toward a peaceful solution for the country's current problem. I am ready to talk to the opposition, and if the opposition agrees to hold talks, I would welcome that. [passage omitted]

[Mudhish] Have the incidents now taking place in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and India anything to do with what is happening in Bangladesh?

[Ershad] I do not want to say that there is a link between what is happening in those countries and what is happening in Bangladesh. However, what is happening in Bangladesh today is not normal or democratic. I believe that a plot is being hatched in the south of the country by the rebels who are trying to threaten our sovereignty.

[Mudhish] The government has declared that it will ban the activities of the Communist Party because of its participation in destructive sabotage acts. There are reports that the government will take similar measures to stop the activities of the Islamic groups. Are these reports true?

[Ershad] It is not right for any democratic or constitutional party to include destructive elements in its ranks. I believe that some of these elements have invaded our politics. The Communist Party always seeks destructive activities. However, the Islamic groups have not been involved in such destructive activities. The communists participate in these activities in the country.

[Mudhish] Does this mean that the Islamic groups will not be subject to any measures the government might take?

[Ershad] Yes.

[Mudhish] Has the economic crisis Bangladesh is experiencing anything to do with what is happening now?

[Ershad] The opposition parties destroyed the country's economy. You know how terrible the situation is: The country has been exposed to a series of severe floods which has resulted in losses amounting to more than 2 billion dollars. [passage omitted]

[Mudhish] Does his excellency the president believe that there are foreign powers behind the incidents in the country, or have these incidents been instigated by national political aspirations?

[Ershad] No one would support such destructive acts. If the opposition announced that it would abstain from throwing bombs and explosives, I would say that 100 percent of the people would challenge the opposition on that point—except perhaps for 1 or 2 percent, a small percentage that could be ignored. This small percentage cannot instigate or carry out incidents such as those which took place in Bangladesh. There could have been foreign powers behind the incidents.

[Mudhish] Do we understand from this that the opposition is planning to seize power? Or merely to cause riots in order to achieve limited gains?

[Ershad] All the opposition parties are struggling to gain power.

[Mudhish] Mr President, which section is striving most in its ambition to seize power?

[Ershad] The Awami League, as it was not a legitimate political party but an organization. It did not receive support from the people of this country, because the Awami League does not believe in Islam but in secularism. This is unacceptable to the people in our country. Not even 1 percent of the people support it. This group stirs up chaos and creates obstacles in the country. If elections were held today, this group would win no votes; it would lose power. [passage omitted]

[Mudhish] With regard to Iran's insistence on and procrastination in not implementing the Security Council resolution calling for a cease-fire, what method do you think can be used to force Iran to listen to the will of the international community to end the war and safeguard navigation in the Arabian Gulf?

[Ershad] Being a member of the Good Offices Committee, Bangladesh exerted great efforts to secure a cease-fire between the two countries. Iraq responded to the committee's call each time, whereas Iran always refused to listen to the voice of peace. We appreciate Iraq's constructive attitude. We feel that Iran should respond to the peace call. The Arab League and all Arab states must persuade Iran to accept the Security Council resolution and put an end to this destructive war, because ending this war will result in prosperity for the entire Islamic nation. [passage omitted]

Ershad Urges Resistance to Vested Interests

BK081618 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] President Ershad said national progress and independence cannot be allowed to be jeopardized by vested interests. He was addressing a huge rally of workers at Tongi near Dhaka today. The president said Bangladesh is a poor country with meager resources and a heavy population burden. During the last 6 years, we have attained a state of economic growth with the united endeavors of all. Any attempt to undo this economic progress has to be resisted unitedly; otherwise, the common man and the middle class will be hard hit. He regretted while his government has been striving hard to build the country and national economy for the welfare of the people, a section of vested interests is out to destroy it. The president called upon the people to build up social resistance against terrorism and said otherwise the society will become its hostage.

After the rally the president drove to Ershad Nagar and visited the shishu [children] hospital and sarcari prathamic vidyalaya [government primary school] there.

Warns of Foreign Media 'Campaign'

BK081714 Hong Kong AFP in English 1704 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 8 (AFP)—Bangladesh President Hussain Mohammad Ershad Tuesday warned the country of a campaign being waged against it by a foreign radio and television station.

Mr. Ershad, speaking at a rally in the Tongi industrial township near here, did not identify the station in question.

"Who are they? They are the people who looted our resources. Surely they do not like to see us progress," the official BSS news agency quoted Mr. Ershad as saying.

His warning coincided with a protest to the British Government over what were described as the "highly motivated and fictitious comments" made by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in its recent coverage of events in Bangladesh.

BSS said the British high commissioner (ambassador) in Dhaka, D.G. Streeton, had been summoned to the Foreign Ministry earlier Tuesday when the protest note was handed over.

Mr. Streeton expressed his regrets and said the note would be passed on to his government, BSS reported.

Mr. Ershad told the rally that an "ominous design is being hatched" against Bangladesh and he urged its people to "unitedly oppose it."

Mr. Streeton was previously called to the Foreign Office on December 1 to receive another protest note about the BBC's coverage of events in Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, the BBC's Dhaka correspondent, Ataus Samad, was freed Tuesday after being detained for more than two weeks, family sources said.

Mr. Samad, 50, who has worked for the British media for 10 years, was picked up from his Dhaka home on November 23 and put under preventive detention for three months under the country's Special Powers Act.

His detention followed the arrests of a large number of opposition leaders and professionals in recent anti-government protests in Bangladesh.

President Hussain Mohammad Ershad told a meeting of editors of national newspapers and news agencies Monday that Mr. Samad and two senior opposition politicians would be freed shortly.

No indication was yet available as to when the two women alliance leaders—Sheikh Hasina Wajed and Begum Khaleda Zia—would be released. Both have been under house arrest since November 11.

Protest Lodged With UK Over BBC Reports

BK081603 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Bangladesh has lodged a strong protest with Britain over the highly objectionable comments made by BBC in its recent broadcasts. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka the British high commissioner was summoned to the Foreign Office this morning. A strong protest note was handed over to him for the highly objectionable and motivated comments by BBC in its broadcast and also the comments made by Mark Tully in the BBC Bengali service yesterday evening. He said the high commissioner expressed his regret and said that he would immediately convey the contents of the protest note to his government.

Opposition Reportedly Not To Join Elections

BK090338 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] In Bangladesh, opposition parties have refused to consider participating in the parliamentary elections until two of their leaders are released from house arrest. Both Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia were placed under house arrest on the 11th of last month, the day after the opposition began a campaign to oust Mr Ershad. Demanding their release, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party leader, Mirza Gholam Hafiz, said the government is only complicating the situation by keeping the two leaders under house arrest.

Curfew Reimposed in Metropolitan Areas 8 Dec

BK081556 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] The curfew is being reimposed at 2300 [1700 GMT] tonight and will continue till 0500 tomorrow morning in the metropolitan areas of Dhaka, Chittagong, and Khulna and Rajshahi and Narayanganj towns. The industrial areas of Demra, Fatullah, and Adamji in Dhaka and Narayanganj and the (Fulsar Hat) industrial area in Chittagong are exempted from curfew.

GDR Minister Departs for Karachi 8 Dec

BK081636 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] The GDR deputy foreign minister, Dr H.D. Winter, left Dhaka today for Karachi at the end of his 4-day visit to Bangladesh. He was seen off at the airport by Deputy Foreign Minister Wajid Ali Khan Panni. During his stay, the GDR minister held talks on bilateral and international matters.

Service of Oil, Gas Companies Made Essential

BK090336 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
0110 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] The government has declared the service of all categories of employees of Bangladesh Oil, Gas, and Mineral Corporation and Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited as essential. An official handout says the step has been taken to keep the necessary services continuing to meet the requirements of the people.

India

Gandhi Welcomes U.S.-USSR Missile Accord

BK090806 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Excerpt] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has hailed the agreement signed in Washington last night between the Soviet leader, Mr Gorbachev, and President Reagan to eliminate medium-range land-based nuclear missiles from Europe.

In a statement in the Lok Sabha today, Mr Gandhi described it as a truly momentous development. Amidst thumping of desks by the members, the prime minister said it is an event of historic significance as this is the first arms reduction agreement in the world. The agreement shows that given political will, technical problems like verification of nuclear weapons can be overcome. Mr Gandhi said that as stated in the Delhi Declaration, the survival of mankind depends upon the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. [passage omitted on summit talks]

Lok Sabha Discussion on U.S Policy Continues

BK081259 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] India has warned the United States that the move by its Senate committee to link India's peaceful nuclear programs with Pakistan's clandestine nuclear weapons program will adversely affect Indo-U.S. relations. Replying to a special discussion on the subject in the Lok Sabha today, the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, said India's grave concern at all levels on this development has been conveyed to the Reagan administration. He expressed the hope that the U.S. Government will listen to the voice of the Indian Parliament and the 800 million Indian people even at this stage and make changes to remove the linkage clause.

Mr Natwar Singh said the government is quite aware that when the draft resolutions come before the U.S. Congress next week, changes might be made in the clauses about the high technology and assistance from international agencies to satisfy India. He made it clear that if the linkage is not removed, the ties between India and the United States are bound to suffer.

Outlining the timetable for the finalization of the U.S. aid package, the minister said the common draft prepared by the joint committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives would be sent to President Reagan by the 16th of this month. Mr Natwar Singh expressed apprehensions that minor changes with regard to transfer of high technology and foreign aid might be made in the draft resolution while keeping some linkage on the question of nuclear programs of India and Pakistan. He expressed the hope that the U.S. Government will listen to the voice of the Parliament and the Indian people and remove the linkage clause. Otherwise, he said, relations between the two countries are bound to suffer.

The minister further told the House that the American ambassador in New Delhi delivered to him a letter which assures the Indian Government that the U.S. executive will work to ensure changes in the draft resolution. Mr Natwar Singh told the members that India would await the final outcome.

About the Indo-U.S. relations, he said we will have to look at them in an integrated way. In the last 30 years, the U.S. chose to give military and economic aid to Pakistan without any restrictions. He said this negative aspect has cast shadows on Indo-U.S. relations. He assured the House that the government will not allow pressures from any direction to alter our basic policy.

Earlier, participating in the resumed discussion initiated by Mr Jaipal Reddy, Janata, members from all sections of the House expressed their anguish at the American attempt to arm-twist India to toe its line. In forceful speeches, they declared that India will not be cowed down by such pressures. Members even suggested that India should refuse all American aid if the U.S. Administration persisted with its policy. They pointed out that the U.S. Senate committee's move is a ruse played by the American Administration to provide uninterrupted military aid to Pakistan.

They urged the government to call off the Army chief's proposed visit to the United States as a protest. There was a suggestion that India should have a second look at its nuclear policy and, if necessary, it should go in for a nuclear bomb.

Minister on Warning to U.S.

BK081615 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] India has warned the United States that linking its peaceful nuclear program with Pakistan's weapons-oriented program will adversely affect Indo-U.S. relations. Replying to a special discussion on the subject in the Lok Sabha today, the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, said India's grave concern on this has been conveyed to the Reagan administration at all levels.

Border Troops Kill 4 Pakistani 'Intruders'

BK081633 Hong Kong AFP in English 1615 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 8 (AFP)—Border troops have shot dead four intruders from Pakistan in Punjab while a Sikh militant and a paramilitary trooper died in other incidents in the northern state, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said Tuesday.

A paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) patrol killed four intruders from Pakistan in a gunbattle near Rooreewala Mahawa border posts in Punjab early Tuesday, PTI said.

Some four or five others in the gang fled back to Pakistan, officials were quoted as saying in Chandigarh, Punjab's capital.

Suspected Sikh militants ambushed a paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) patrol returning to its camp in the frontier district of Amritsar at midnight Monday, killing a constable and wounding another, the news agency said.

In another incident, security forces shot dead a Sikh militant after a 15-minute gunbattle with two Sikhs riding a motorcycle near Kotla Raika village in Faridkot District, PTI said. The other militant escaped.

More than 1,000 people have died this year in Punjab in the bloody Sikh campaign for a homeland called Khalistan, or land of the pure.

Iran

Majlis Speaker Interviewed on Defense

NC090959 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1630 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the imam's representative to the Supreme Defense Council, has paid a 4-day visit to strategic areas in the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the Strait of Hormuz and inspected the defensive and military situation in these areas. Our colleagues in Bandar-e 'Abbas have sent us a report on this.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] In the name of God, the almighty, the merciful. Greetings to our dear viewers. I am speaking to you from the Persian Gulf area.

Following the blatant crimes perpetrated by the reactionary regimes of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf, which were followed by aggression by the United States and NATO members in this strategic area, an opportunity was given to the Islamic Republic of Iran to strengthen its defensive and military positions and to give a serious and strong answer to the acts of mischief done by the United States and its minions in this area.

In order to inspect the positions and the defensive, military, and logistic steps taken on the Persian Gulf coasts, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the imam's representative to the Supreme Defense Council, recently inspected the ports and islands of Baluchestan va Sistan and Hormozgan Provinces. He was accompanied by commanders of the military forces. In an interview at the conclusion of his trip, he discussed various issues, Persian Gulf developments, and steps taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran in relation to the defensive and security forces in the Persian Gulf. I invite you to listen to this interview.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] At a time when the Americans and the NATO group were showing their teeth and claws here, it was necessary for us to become objectively acquainted with our defensive and military potential. This was the reason for this trip. I inspected the area from the Pakistani border, from Gwatar port to Sirri Island. I visited Chah Bahar, Sirri Island, Abu Musa Island, the Tonb-e Islands, Hengam, Larak, Hormoz, Qeshm, and Jask. We also inspected the coastal positions and saw for ourselves both what our military and defensive potentials and their needs are. Possible threats were also studied. The commanders of the Navies of the Armed Forces and of the IRGC, the commander of the Air Force, and others who cooperated with us in this endeavor—Mr Seyyed and (Dr Owhani)—and others were with us. We examined the [Construction] Jihad, procurement, and support activities. We are virtually certain that the Americans will not dare to commit any major mischief here, or if they do, they will regret it.

[Correspondent] We have recently been witnessing a withdrawal of NATO forces from the Persian Gulf. Please comment on what led to this policy and what form the withdrawal is taking.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] It is impossible for them to leave so easily. The fact that they are withdrawing a few minesweepers from the Persian Gulf... well, these minesweepers were formerly in (Khawr Fakkan). They were not here. When they were brought here, there were not so many mines here to justify all the commotion they made. They saw that they had nothing to do and that many ships would simply be idle. Therefore, we are witnessing a withdrawal of the minesweepers. There are rumors that the United States is withdrawing, or at least reducing, its presence. One cannot yet be encouraged by such promises.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency inspected various areas on the coast. Please comment on the Islamic Republic's position in the Persian Gulf. To what extent can the Islamic Republic show its strength as an advocate of security in this region?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] When I saw the situation on the islands and coasts and the potential of the Islamic Republic in the Persian Gulf, I became confident that anyone who wanted to confront the Islamic Republic here would be out of his mind—both the foreign powers that come from afar and those who are in the region. Thank God, our forces have a high morale and good possibilities, and are prepared for defense. Of course, we are not interested, in any way, in a confrontation. We have prepared ourselves for defense.

[Correspondent] I thank our colleagues who made this link possible and bid you farewell. [end recording]

UN Charge of Human Rights Violations Denied

LD081744 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1630 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] The General Assembly of the United Nations Organization in New York yesterday approved a resolution in which accusations regarding human rights violations have been attributed to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

With regard to this issue, our country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has released the following statement:

This resolution, like similar resolutions of previous years, has been approved through the efforts of the United States and some of its allies and puppets. It is a blatant indication of the conspiracy of its authors aimed at creating political pressure and propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as creating confusion in the minds of the world's peoples.

By attacking Islamic law, the contents of this resolution have openly confronted implementation of Islamic punishments [hudud] by the Islamic world and the Muslim nations. It is an indication of the United States' long standing animosity to the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is also a part of the conspiracy of the world of infidelity against the world of Islam.

The Islamic Republic denies all the alleged accusations in this resolution. It believes that approval of such resolutions leads the United Nations Organization and its decisions to lose credibility.

Taking pride in Islamic laws and in implementing Islamic punishments, the Islamic Republic has always stated its viewpoint regarding Islamic and international issues in international forums and will never surrender to such agitation which stems purely from unjust political motives.

Tehran TV on U.S.-Soviet Summit, Gulf War

NC091126 Tehran Television Service in Persian
1630 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, who arrived in Washington this morning, began his talks with President Reagan this afternoon.

During this meeting, which is the third between the two heads of state since Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union, the war of Iraq against Iran, issues pertaining to Afghanistan, the agreement on removing medium- and short-range missiles from Europe and from the entire world, and the question of the emigration of Soviet Jews from the USSR will top the list of topics to be discussed.

Although the Western mass media are trying to downplay the discussions on Iraq's war against Iran, the East-West accord on other Islamic movements, and particularly the question of Afghanistan, nevertheless these issues head the list of the topics to be discussed by Gorbachev and Reagan.

Regarding discussions on the imposed war during these talks, officials of the Islamic Republic believe it should be noted that we are the only country whose domestic and foreign policies cannot be affected by international agreements between the heads of the big powers. This is because our foreign policy is based on Islamic principles and is being implemented in the world with a strength that stems from the strength of our revolutionary and Muslim people. Therefore, this strength cannot be affected by the various political trends in the world.

Another matter to be discussed at the talks will be the first agreement on the removal of medium- and short-range missiles from Europe, that will be signed in the presence of 6,000 foreign correspondents. Previous agreements only called for an arms limitation. With this agreement, both countries will begin the complete destruction of missiles with ranges between 300 and 3,000 miles, or 500 to 5,000 km.

Regarding this agreement, it should be noted that by this step, the two countries are seeking ways to improve their economies which are in a critical condition. The United States will try to partially reduce its immense budget deficit, and the Soviet Union will be able to consider the welfare of its people to a certain extent, instead of giving priority to the manufacture of strategic weapons. Apparently, another concession that the Soviet Union will make to the United States will be permission for some Jews to leave the country and go to occupied Palestine.

Tehran Arabic Comments on Summit, Afghanistan

NC082012 Tehran International Service in Arabic
1730 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The topics on the agenda of the talks between the U.S. and Soviet leaders are classified according to the interests of both Moscow and Washington. The major topic is the agreement on reducing medium-range nuclear arms. The signing of this accord comes after 6 years of bilateral negotiations between U.S. and Soviet delegates in Geneva. European pressure on the two superpowers has accelerated the conclusion of this agreement because the party primarily harmed by the production and deployment of the medium-range nuclear missiles is Europe itself, the countries of which are within the range of these missiles. The signing of this accord is considered a victory for the European countries. However, it does not constitute an important element in the disarmament process which the Third World countries are calling for.

The weapons which will be eliminated under the agreement do not represent more than (?4 percent) of the two countries' total nuclear arsenal. Thus, the conclusion of this agreement does not constitute an important factor in establishing world peace. The reduction [as heard] of medium-range missiles does not mean the cessation of the arms race policy; rather, this agreement will lead to the opening of new doors for such a race. An example of this is the U.S. decision to commence basic experiments on the Star Wars program. This decision was the initial result arising from the SALT I and SALT II strategic weapons agreements. The limitations imposed on the deployment of strategic weapons prompted the United States to open new doors for the arms race. Therefore, the medium-range missiles agreement is no more than a propaganda ploy to improve the image of the United States and the Soviet Union, and to cover up the behind-the-scenes programs and resolutions to continue the production of modern and advanced weapons.

Meanwhile, among the issues to be discussed by the two leaders is the Afghanistan question, particularly now that the Soviets and Americans view conditions as favorable for finding a speedy solution to this issue. The Soviets want to pull out of Afghanistan because of their continuous defeats and tremendous losses there. The United States hopes to use this withdrawal for its interests and to exploit the Soviet desire to break the Afghanistan impasse. This Soviet desire is so great that it constitutes a joint American-Soviet policy seeking a compromise solution that would fulfill the desires of both parties.

The Islamic opposition in Afghanistan has anticipated a Soviet-U.S. accord to resolve the Afghanistan issue securing both sides' interests and, naturally, ignoring the Afghan people's interest. As a result, the Afghan Islamic opposition factions have hurried to issue statements warning of the two giants' imminent resolutions in the United States. An Afghan Islamic movement leader has said: Our people, who have resisted the Soviet invasion thus far, are capable of continuing their holy jihad until Afghanistan is liberated from the hands of the arrogant powers.

Commentary on Danger of U.S. Presence in Gulf

LD081404 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1100 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Station commentary: "The Presence of U.S. Forces in the Persian Gulf Means the Continuation of Tension in the Region"]

[Excerpts] Shipping sources in London have announced that a U.S. military base in the southern Persian Gulf has been hit by a surface-to-surface missile. This military base, which was recently placed at the disposal of the U.S. military by the Kuwaiti Government, was a barge moored close to Kuwait's coast. After a period of calm, lasting 1 week, the present increase in tension and lack of tranquility in the Persian Gulf can be timed from the moment Kuwait announced that it had offered the United States a supply base in the form of a barge in order to extend assistance to ships close to the territorial waters of that country. This step was taken by Kuwait at a time when that country—toward the end of the month of Khordad [May 22-June 21]—impudently requested that its tankers be protected by the U.S. fleet, thus making the presence of foreign forces in the Persian Gulf region official.

During this time, reactionary Arab countries have been supporting the intruding presence of the United States and its NATO allies and have been trying to preserve the falling regime of Baghdad by handing out financial and material aid. However, the alien forces in the Persian Gulf have encountered many dangers arising from their aggressive presence and the fact that they were protecting their own interests in the region.

Now, reports of the past few days have stated that NATO minesweepers have left the Persian Gulf region. This could be seen as a preliminary to the defeat of U.S. foreign policy in the region. It could also be seen as a situation whereby European countries are trying to distance themselves from potential dangers arising from their support for Washington's unbalanced policies. Of course, according to many political observers, Washington's aim at this stage was to use the withdrawal of NATO's minesweepers as a way of making some concession to the Muslim people of Iran who felt concern over the presence of U.S. forces in the region. [passage omitted] Since yesterday, however, when one of the United States' floating bases in the Persian Gulf was hit by a missile, diplomats in the region have termed the continuation of the U.S. naval presence in the region as unreliable and dangerous. Also, there have been many commentaries from the world's mass media concerning the unstable and confused policy of the United States. Among these viewpoints and comments, the view that Iran has not surrendered to pressures at the United Nations on the eve of the two superpowers' negotiations, and will not surrender, is an important part of the media coverage given to yesterday's missile attack. Western circles have also mentioned that the missile attack was a reaction on the part of Iran to protest Kuwait's decision to place a floating military base at the disposal of the United States in the coastal waters of that country. This move can only result in strengthening the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf and in aggressive actions against the Islamic Revolution.

In any case, it is certain that the Islamic Republic, after 7 years of holy defense, has the capability to control the region's waterways, and the necessary facilities at its disposal to take retaliatory measures against any kind of aggression. However, the interfering and foreign forces, paying no heed to the consequences of their presence in the region, are trying to prepare the necessary grounds for making their presence in the region a permanent one. In this endeavor they have no qualms about threatening and inciting the Gulf countries.

The damaging consequences of the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf, which has so far resulted in the loss of more than 50 Marines and millions of dollars in financial losses, clearly shows the uncertain and dark future of the U.S. presence. The shadow of millions of fighters, who have volunteered for the fronts and who have completed their training over the past 2 weeks, is also weighing heavily on the conscience of the U.S. Marines, because the martyr-seeking Mobilization forces are pointing their loaded guns toward the alien forces. They stand resolute.

Cabinet Discusses Budget at 9 Dec Session
LD091411 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] During its session this morning, the Cabinet continued reviewing the notes of the budget for the year 1367 [beginning 21 March 1988], which was begun at the last meeting. During this session, the Cabinet approved the report on inflation control and stressed the need to maintain the value of the currency, as well as the need to increase facilities and funds for cultural and education matters. The Cabinet confirmed that this would be one of the main policies of the government in drawing up next year's budget. The Council of Ministers also approved 14 more notes, including the 16th note with some amendments on providing more opportunities for investments through the people's own initiative and the collection of taxes in arrears from the prerevolution era, in order to meet requirements of various regions in the country.

At the conclusion of this session, Prime Minister Musavi granted an interview to our correspondent. He explained some points on the reply given by the imam of the ummah to a question of the labor and social affairs minister about the establishment of obligatory regulations for production and service units which utilize government services.

Saudi Group Condemns Kingdom's Regime
LD091151 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] The U.S. regime of Al Sa'ud, with its suppressive policies, torture, and massacre of Muslims, ordered its security forces to arrest a large group of Muslim people of Hijaz [area of Saudi Arabia] and the committed and Muslim youths of Al-Dammam and the [words indistinct] regions. Those arrested were subjected to various forms of severe torture on charges of following divine instructions and involvement in the bombings of U.S. installations in that country.

According to a Central News Unit report, the Hijazian ulema and religious students residing in Qom have issued a statement condemning these acts. They warned the statesmen of the regime ruling over Hijaz that should they not refrain from their inhumane policies and continue to obey the criminal instructions of the arch Satan United States, they would increase the wrath of the Muslim people of Hijaz and would hasten their own collapse.

In view of the shameful history of the Al Sa'ud regime and its crimes against Muslims, particularly the massacre of the pilgrims to God's house and the torture and killing of the Muslim people of Hijaz, the Hijazian ulema and religious students have called upon the armed forces of Hijaz to come to their senses and eliminate this seed of corruption from the face of the earth.

Khamene'i Receives Donations for War Effort
LD081756 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 8, IRNA—President 'Ali Khamene'i received millions of rials in cash and hundreds of pieces of gold jewelry donated by generous Iranian and other Muslims to be spent on war efforts, at a special ceremony held here Tuesday.

During the ceremony, Iran's charge d'affaires in London Mohammad Mahdi Akhundzadeh who was also present, submitted the president an amount of $5,800 and precious jewelry donated by an Iraqi Muslim residing in London.

Mrs. Mottaqi Tabar, a Pakistani lady, presented all her gold ornaments to the president for spending on the battlefields of the Iraqi-imposed war.

The donations handed over to the president also include a wedding ring mailed by an American Muslim woman from Washington, who wished Iran's Muslim combatants a grand victory.

At the end of the ceremony, President Khamene'i thanking the donators said that one of the greatest characteristics of the Islamic revolution is its endearment to the faith and hearts of the people from various walks of life.

"The Islamic revolution belongs to all Muslims and we could not have resisted our different enemies, if people had not demonstrated such a great spirit of devotion", noted the president.

Khamene'i who also heads the Supreme Defence Council stressed that pressure exerted on the Islamic revolution by the United States, its European allies, its puppet regimes around the world and its regional reactionaries is doomed to defeat, in the face of the Iranian Muslim people's determination.

The nation blessed with a committed people, brave combatants and a decisive divine leadership, is determined to continue treading its chosen path until the ultimate victory over the enemy, said the president.

Neither conferences, threats or the presence of foreign naval fleets in the region are able to have even the least effect on the Iranian people's firm resistance, concluded the president.

LE MONDE Interviews Larijani on French Ties

PM081450 Paris LE MONDE in French 5 Dec 87 p 3

[Interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Larijani by Charles Lescaut in New York; date not given]

[Text] New York (United Nations)—"There is not a single country in the world that would sacrifice the possibility of good relations with Iran for the benefit of a smaller, poorer, and strategically less important country." Filling his pipe with tobacco, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Larijani, a small bearded man who looks like a provincial teacher, spoke confidently about what he called "one of the most important issues of the moment;" namely, Franco-Iranian relations.

"France is wrong to invest so much in its relations with Iraq," he said, "instead of exploiting the store of sympathy it acquired during the early days of the Islamic Revolution because of the Air France plane which brought Ayatollah Khomeyni to Tehran" (on 4 February 1979—LE MONDE editor's note). According to Mr Larijani, "Iraq is a divided country, with a weak regime and a president whose time is running out, whereas the Iranian regime is stable."

"We are offering France close and mutually beneficial cooperation, provided Paris gradually moves away from Baghdad and Washington," he stressed, admitting that such a change of direction is probably not easy to achieve. "However, we are prepared to work patiently to expand our relations and to discuss all issues, including the fate of the three French hostages still held in Beirut. The ball is in France's court."

Appealing several times to "the French people's spirit of independence," Mr Larijani said that "it is not in France's interest to seem to be automatically supporting U.S. diplomacy." "General de Gaulle would probably not have liked that," he added, repeating that "from the start of the Israeli-Arab conflict, the general froze arms sales to the warring countries." "Why are arms sales to Iraq more 'moral' than any military supplies to Iran?" he asked.

Are the disputes between Paris and Tehran being settled? "Yes," he said, "we recently reached a good agreement." Carefully avoiding any confirmation of reports that Paris last week agreed to pay some of the money claimed by Tehran, Mr Larijani nonetheless admitted that "the money had not arrived 3 days ago." "If a financial agreement was reached, it has nothing to do with the hostage affair."

According to the deputy foreign minister, "France stands to gain from repaying the money it owes to Iran, because Paris must honor its own signature." "France is not only rich enough to pay its debts, but its treasury is 'getting a good deal' by paying now when the dollar is so low," he said with a hint of a smile. "In any event, the financial problem has virtually been solved because instead of $800 million just a short time ago, the disagreement now only relates to a small, insignificant amount." The repayment of the outstanding sum is apparently more of an internal political problem than a foreign policy problem.

What does Tehran think of the political situation in France? "It is a scene of bloody strife," Mr Larijani said immediately, and for the time being his support clearly goes to [French Prime Minister] Jacques Chirac: "He ought not to be criticized for paying, because it is not dishonorable to pay your debts." On the other hand, "Iran has grievances against [former French Foreign Minister] Claude Cheysson...."

Foreign Minister To Visit Pakistan 10 Dec

LD081543 Tehran IRNA in English 1439 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 8, IRNA—Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati will lead a high ranking political and economic delegation to Pakistan on Thursday to discuss bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues with Pakistani officials.

The visit takes place in response to the Pakistani foreign minister's visit to Tehran last year.

Afghan Mujahidin Leader Meets Velayati

LD081813 Tehran IRNA in English 1720 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 8, IRNA—Afghan mujahidin want nothing short of an Islamic Government, and oppose installation of any superpower client regime in Afghanistan, said a mujahidin leader here today.

Qazi Muhammad Amin made the remark in a meeting with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, where he denounced tendency of certain Afghan parties' leaders towards the return of the former ruler Zahir Shah and establishment of a monarchy in this Muslim country.

In response, Velayati referred to negotiations being held by the superpowers on the Afghan issue and said only Islam can foil Eastern and Western-hatched plots. Velayati also reiterated support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Afghan nation.

USSR Ambassador Meets With IRGC's Rafiqdust
LD081719 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Mr Gudev, USSR ambassador in Tehran, this morning met with IRGC Minister Rafiqdust. The expansion of bilateral cooperation and relations were discussed.

Musavi-Ardabili Receives USSR Envoy
LD091132 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, Musavi-Ardabili, president of the Supreme Judicial Council, this morning received Mr Gudev, the USSR ambassador in Tehran. In the course of this meeting, Mr Gudev stressed the desire of his country's leadership to have good and constructive relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said: The reactionary and imperialist circles are attempting to disrupt our bilateral relations.

Also during this meeting, the president of the Supreme Judicial Council, while explaining the principled stances of the Islamic Republic of Iran toward the UN and the Security Council, detailed some facts about the Persian Gulf.

Greek Ambassador Meets With Majlis Official
LD080720 Tehran IRNA in English 0550 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 8, IRNA—Greek ambassador to Tehran Dhimitrios Erjiriedis [name as received] and Majlis (parliament) Vice-Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Yazdi here Monday reviewed outlooks for broadening Iran-Greece relations.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Yazdi expressed satisfaction with Tehran-Athens ties and briefed the Greek ambassador on Iran's stance towards the seven-year-old Iraqi-imposed war.

He said that the Security Council Resolution 598 has some 'positive points' and that it might work if it safeguards Iran's lawful rights.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Yazdi and Erjiriedis emphasized the need to expand bilateral parliamentary ties.

Romanian Envoy Meets With Budget Minister
LD071049 Tehran IRNA in English 0820 GMT 7 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 7, IRNA—Romanian Ambassador to Tehran Ilie Casu held talks with Plan and Budget Minister Ma'sud Roghani Zanjani here Sunday and expressed his country's willingness to expand relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran-Romania cooperation in manufacturing, ship building, oil, industrial and petrochemical fields and increase of Iran's non-oil exports to Romania were discussed in the meeting. The two sides agreed that preparations be made for a joint session of Iran-Romania experts in the upcoming Iranian year.

Roghani Zanjani heads Irano-Romanian economic cooperation commission.

Italian Envoy Meets With Hormozgan Governor
LD061627 Tehran IRNA in English 1555 GMT 6 Dec 87

[Text] Bandar-e 'Abbas, Dec 6, IRNA—Italian ambassador to Iran, Giuseppe Balducci met the Governor of Hormozgan Province Br. Tajik here today and discussed with him matters of mutual interest.

In the meeting the existing bilateral relations between the two countries in economic, social and political fields were reviewed and satisfaction expressed at the Italian companies' cooperation in building an oil refinery in this strategic southern Iranian port.

The Bandar-e 'Abbas refinery, work for which is to start soon, will be the eighth oil refinery in the country on completion.

Iraqi 'Empty Claims' on Oil Reserves Derided
LD082129 Tehran IRNA in English 1821 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 8, IRNA—In light of recent reports by Iraqi officials claiming increase in Iraq's oil reserves, observers expect Baghdad to boast within the next few months of having the largest oil reserves in the world.

It would not come as a surprise if one day Iraqi officials claim that they have surpassed Saudi Arabia, the country having the world's largest proven reserves, or for that matter their (Iraq's) reserves are equal to those of other OPEC member states put together.

These empty claims are in fact political ploys which the Ba'thist regime has resorted to on the eve of the 82nd OPEC meet in Vienna, in a vain bid to redeem its lost politico-economic prestige.

Baghdad, in a futile bid to boost its share of OPEC-assigned quotas, recently claimed that its oil reserves have substantially increased.

Such unfounded allegations are made by the Iraqi regime at a time, when in league with certain OPEC members it has destabilized the oil price by glutting the market by unlawful means, in a blatant violation of OPEC decisions.

According to an IRNA expert on oil affairs, one of the goals of such propaganda ballyhoo raised by Iraq in coordination with certain OPEC renegades, is to overshadow the forthcoming talks among OPEC oil ministers and to divert world public opinion.

Iraq, which has paid scant respect to OPEC's vital rulings of the past few meetings, claimed in January, 1987 that with discovery of new oil resources its proven oil reserves have climbed to 72 billion barrels from the previous 65 billion barrels.

When Iraq's inability to repay its huge foreign debts was revealed two years ago, the Ba'thist regime in league with its allies in OPEC called for a quota equal to that of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Obviously when this illogical Iraqi demand was rejected by the majority of the Organization's member states, this regime continued its violation of its OPEC-assigned quotas.

It is interesting that certain OPEC member states such as Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, which are pumping in excess of their quotas since the last OPEC session, have also claimed, like Iraq, that their oil reserves have boosted.

Observers noting that all Iraqi oil fields are located in the northern, eastern and southern parts of that country and the fact that these vital areas are beyond Baghdad's control since the start of its aggression on Iran, have dismissed the Iraqi claims as "baseless". Iraqi oil-rich regions are exposed to attacks of dissident Iraqi people, they point out.

Moreover due to its repeated violations of the Organization's decisions, Iraqi has been isolated in OPEC and consequently it is obvious that the hard-pressed Ba'thist regime is resorting to a ruse for further quotas, in a vain bid to redeem its lost prestige.

It should be noted that increase of oil reserves cannot, and must not be a criteria for a rise in any country's quota, otherwise OPEC's total production ceiling should be raised to an astronomical 30 m. BPD so that demands of all member states might be met, something the likelihood of which is far-fetched in the foreseeable future.

Commentary Endorses 'Rapid' End to War

NC061213 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0710 GMT 6 Dec 87

[Unattributed commentary from the "Voice of the Front" feature]

[Text] With regard to the war, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the best way to achieve peace is through the dispatch of forces to the fronts. We must be able to inflict our blows on the enemy at any moment we choose, and so we must always have the forces needed on the fronts. With our recent dispatch of forces, we are actually building reserves to inflict consecutive blows, our current tactic in the war.

As far as the region is concerned, the superpowers and the reactionaries have now made their policy in the region contingent on the developments of the war. We believe that by mobilizing the forces on the fronts, we will be moving the region one step closer to security and stability. The Islamic Republic's policy is not one of spreading the war to the other regional countries. What we want is a rapid end to the war, which will benefit the region and the heroic and Islamic Iranian nation.

IRNA Reviews KDP Operations Against Iraq

LD071849 Tehran IRNA in English 1620 GMT 7 Dec 87

[Text] Bakhtaran, Dec. 7, IRNA—Iraq's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) has captured 1,527 Iraqi officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers during 656 operations against government forces since the beginning of the current Iranian year (21 March 1987).

Announcing the above today, KDP head Mas'ud Barzani added that 3,423 Ba'thist troops were killed and 3,232 others wounded by his forces in the course of the operations.

Barzani said during the said period KDP forces shot down 14 Iraqi warplanes and helicopters and destroyed 38 tanks and personnel carriers, 20 Howitzers, 11 anti-aircraft guns, 377 military vehicles, 6 telecommunication centers and 375 militry bases of the enemy.

KDP also seized intact 35 Howitzers and mortar launchers, 105 vehicles and a great deal of weaponry and munitions from the Ba'thist enemy, said Barzani, adding that during the period 770 Iraqi civilians joined KDP forces.

Kurdish Party Names Dead in Hospital Bombing

LD051914 Tehran IRNA in English 1400 GMT 5 Dec 87

[Text] Orumiyeh, West Azarbayjan Prov., Dec. 5, IRNA—The Iraqi regime had deceitfully painted its warplane with the Islamic Republic's flag during its bombing of a hospital in Dohuk, northern Iraq on Nov. 18, in a vain bid to discredit Iran in the eyes of the Kurdish Muslims.

Iraq's Kurdistan's Democratic Party (KDP) released a statement revealing evidence of the Baghdad regime's brutality. The disguised Ba'thist regime's warplane dropped six bombs on the hospital on Nov. 18, and in order to mislead public opinion, it also exploded a SAM missile in Sina Mountain, it added.

The KDP said the supposed victims of the deceitful Iraqi bombing were in fact dead bodies of eleven Kurds, brought to the hospital by Ba'thist agents. The 11 Kurdish Muslims were arrested four months ago and shot dead by the Iraqi regime a day before the bombardment. It added.

KDP released the names of nine of the victims as follows:

1-Haji Hasan Rashid (73)

2-Hazan Asghar Ziva'i (52)

3-Sulayman Divali 'Uthmani (60)

4-Rawzat Muhammad 'Ali 'Uthmani (52)

5-'Umar Isma'il 'Uthmani (60)

6-Taha Ni'mat 'Uthmani (60)

7-Sawar Isma'il 'Uthmani (60)

8-Isma'il As'ad 'Uthmani (50)

9-Latif 'Adil 'Uthmani (15).

Combat Operations Against Iraq Continue

Communique No 3,044

LD081743 Tehran IRNA in English 1714 GMT 8 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 8, IRNA—An Iraqi Sukhoi-22 warplane was subjected to Iranian anti-aircraft fire at 15:10 (11:40 GMT) Monday in southern operational regions and downed near the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr, said a military communique here Tuesday.

Communique Number 3044 of the Joint Staff Command said Iranian fighter-bombers heavily bombed parts of Iraqi fortifications and concentration centers in east of Basra, southern fronts, and Hajj 'Umran, northeastern Iraq, at 08:50 and 11:05 hours local time (05:20 and 07:35 GMT) respectively Tuesday. All the attacking jet fighters returned to their bases safely after inflicting substantial losses on the enemy forces.

Iranian naval forces intercepted nine foreign tankers and cargo ships in the Strait of Hormuz Monday, but allowed them to proceed since they had no Iraqi-bound cargo aboard.

Muslim combatants of Iran subjected Iraqi positions and fortifications and supply axes to their heavy artillery fire throughout the fronts, killing and wounding some enemy troops and destroying parts of positions and defence lines of theirs. Iranian Muslim forces reconnoitered Iraqi activities by dispatching patrol units throughout the battlefronts. Enemy positions in Mehran, Khushk and Zayd regions were heavily shelled by the Iranians.

Iraqi tank fire was silenced in Helaleh, Hoseyniyeh and east of Basra where several enemy tanks were damaged by the Muslim combatants. Movement of Iraqi motorized columns was brought to a halt in Chuwartah, Panjwin and Yebis.

Reconnaissance flights of Iraqi copters were checked in Varmahraz [name as received] and Zurbatiyah regions.

Iran's Gendarmerie forces checked enemy engineering activities and destroyed more than 10 Iraqi positions, two fuel tankers as well as two light and heavy vehicles killing the personnel on board, concluded the communique.

Iraqi Sites Near Basra Bombed

LD091025 Tehran IRNA in English 1020 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 9, IRNA—Iranian fighter bombers pounded Iraqi troop concentration sites and a munition depot east-of-Basra operational theater at 09:00 hours local time (05:30 GMT) Wednesday.

All aircraft returned to bases safely after inflicting heavy damage on the Iraqi positions.

Communique No 3,045

LD091515 Tehran IRNA in English 1446 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 9, IRNA—Iran's jet fighters heavily bombed an Iraqi troop concentration site and a munition depot near Abu al-Khasib, east of Basra, at 09:00 hours local time (05:30 GMT) Wednesday, inflicting substantial casualties and losses on the enemy and returning safely to bases, said a military communique here today.

The 3045th Joint Staff Communique said that Iranian naval gunboats intercepted and inspected 10 cargo ships and oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz Tuesday but allowed 9 of them to continue voyage after making certain there was no Iraqi-destined cargo aboard them.

However the remaining ship believed to be carrying suspicious cargo was escorted to a southern Iranian port for thorough inspection, it added.

At the northern tip of the Persian Gulf Iraq's Al-'Amayah oil platform in the Persian Gulf was set ablaze an d sustained heavy losses by Iranian coastal artillery fire Tuesday.

Iran's Muslim combatants pounded Iraqi positions throughout the battlefields with artillery and mortar fire Tuesday, inflicting considerable losses in men and equipment on enemy troops.

Iranian Gendarmerie forces responded to Iraqi artillery fire in parts of the southern and western fronts Tuesday, killing or wounding a number of enemy soldiers and destroying 10 gun emplacements and a vehicle of theirs.

In Yebis, Chazabeh and north of Hur al-Azim, southern sector, several Iraqi tanks suffered heavy losses and movement of enemy motorized units was checked by Iranian artillery fire Tuesday.

The artillery fire of the Muslim forces routed several Iraqi patrol convoys attempting to infiltrate Iranian positions in Chazabeh, Sharhani and areas overlooking Mehran yesterday.

Iraqi forces sustained several casualties and losses and their engineering operations including setting up of embankments and road building were also checked in Zurbatiyah by Iranian artillery fire Tuesday, concluded the communique.

Iraqi Raid Injures 8 Civilians

LD091711 Tehran IRNA in English 1627 GMT 9 Dec 87

[Text] Orumiyeh, West Azarbayjan Prov., Dec. 9, IRNA—Eight civilians were martyred and injured when Iraqi warplanes bombed a village in the suburb of the border town of Piranshahr, in this northwestern Iranian Province, at 12:15 hours local time (08:45 GMT) Wednesday. Some houses in the village were also damaged in the course of the savage Iraqi bombing.